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Motivators and Demotivators of Dominican Immigrant High School ESL Students in Puerto Rico

Luis A. Amador
Walden University

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Walden University

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Luis A. Amador Negrón

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the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Peter Kiriakidis, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Dawn DiMarzo, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Cathryn Walker White, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2018

Abstract

Motivators and Demotivators of Dominican Immigrants

High School ESL Students in Puerto Rico

by

Luis A. Amador

MA, University of Phoenix, 2009

BS, University of Sacred Heart, 1998

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

June 2018

Abstract

The problem is that Dominican student immigrants enrolling in Puerto Rican high schools need to be English proficient and the English as second language program (ESL) is not effectively supporting these students to develop English proficiency to graduate from the target high school. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students regarding motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. Using Krashen's conceptual framework, students' perceptions of motivators and demotivators regarding ESL classes, and their suggestions for improving the ESL instruction were explored. A qualitative case study design, using purposeful sampling was used to collect data through semi structured one-on-one interviews from 8 ESL students who met the criteria of being a Dominican ESL student and being 18 years or older. Data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti 7. The findings indicated more time and instructional support was needed for ESL students to develop English proficiency and targeted professional development was needed for the ESL teachers. Themes emerging from the findings were that ESL teachers should (a) use motivators and specific instructional strategies, (b) be aware of demotivators, and that (c) additional instructional time was needed to improve students' English proficiency. A white paper with recommendations to improve ESL instruction developed to present to district stakeholders. The adoption of these recommendations will result in social change by strengthening ESL students' English and literacy support, leading to ESL students' academic success, high school graduation and opportunities to attend college or join the workforce.

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Dedication

To my beloved brother Javier (RIP) who was always proud of my academic success, my parents, sisters, nephews, Yariel, Jean, Harold, Carlos and my niece Marie, for their support and understanding during this EdD journey. To nephew Ivancito who has always, even though the remoteness, has supported me. To my friends who have always had supporting words for me such as Nomara and Ivan who never let me give up.

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Section 1: The Problem

Definition of the Problem

Puerto Rico has been a Caribbean possession of the United States since 1898 (Pousada, 2010). The Americanization efforts to culturally and linguistically integrate the island's population into the United States included the English language in schools. Spanish has been the primary spoken language in public schools in Puerto Rico since the 1950s; however, English is mandatory from elementary school to college or university. The English language acquisition in Puerto Rican public schools has changed significantly and has been the focus of debate (Halle, Hair, Wandner, McNamara, & Chien, 2012). Bolderston, Palmer, Flanagan, and McParland (2008) reported that the United States Department of Education (USDOE) has tried to overcome English acquisition by developing programs such as immersion schools. Education-related resources are provided by USDOE to U.S. territories to provide educational services to immigrant students. Immigrants from neighboring islands such as Dominican Republic recognize the importance of their children to learn English as a second language (ESL).

Every year, Dominican immigrant high school students who arrive in Puerto Rico have very low proficiency in English. Thang, Ting, and Nurjanah (2011) stated that ESL teachers should meet the needs of students with less proficiency in English. These students should be provided with interactive and creative activities to learn English (Thang et al., 2011). Literacy classroom activities should be developed to capture these students' interests to help them improve their English proficiency.

The research problem is that Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) has not provided ESL teachers with instructional resources to help Dominican immigrant high school students improve their English proficiency. Dominican immigrant ESL high school students need to demonstrate proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school. Bolderston et al. (2008) explained that the states and territories of United States receive funds through the Migrant Education Program (MEP) and USDOE in order to support state education agencies to address the literacy needs of immigrant students. The U.S. government policy regarding MEP included criteria for state education agencies to use in identifying migrant students (PRDE, 2015). The MEP program is no longer available to literacy teachers due to funding.

At the research site, most Dominican immigrant students who graduated from high school were not college- or university-ready (PRDE, 2015). Additionally, the majority of Dominican immigrant students at the target high school did not graduate from high school because they did not pass state exams in English literacy (PRDE, 2015). Literacy teachers in Puerto Rico who have taught Dominican immigrant students do not have the teaching resources or skills to focus on academics because English is the second language of these students (PRDE, 2015).

High school students should have content knowledge (Conley, 2014a). Preparing high school students for graduation on an English academic level is essential (Kyllonen et al, 2014). Students struggle in English classes (Conley & French, 2014). Students who graduate from high school are required to take college entrance exams on reading,

writing, and math (Richert, 2017). The majority of students who enroll in community colleges take remedial courses (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2017).

High school immigrant ESL students are not entering college because they do not have literacy skills (ACT, 2013) and do not have the motivation and engagement in the classroom (Conley & French, 2014). Literacy skills are important to the success of students after they graduate from high school (Karp & Bork, 2014).

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Dominican immigrant high school students need to attend and pass English classes as a requirement to obtain a high school diploma. The immigrant students from the San Juan area in Puerto Rico have demonstrated little proficiency in English and low motivation to acquire English. The educational services provided by the local DOE are limited and ESL teachers have not been provided with teaching resources to teach these students.

During the 2013-2014 academic school years, 17% of the general students, including Dominican immigrant students, were proficient in ESL subjects (PRDOE, 2014). Puerto Rico's nonparticipation in the MEP has caused immigrant students to have difficulties in acquiring English as a second language. MEP is intended to assist state educational and local service agencies in using resources to expand and providing supplemental instruction and support services to assist migratory children (USDOE, 2012). According to Halle et al. (2012), eligible students who receive these services are immigrants in need of language-learning assistance, who attend public or private schools

in Puerto Rico for at least 3 academic years. The area of greatest concentration of immigrant students is San Juan, where educational centers used to offer services to these students in three elementary schools. Schools outside of the San Juan area include intermediate and high schools and do not receive funding for supplemental educational services. The San Juan metropolitan area has more than 30 suburbs. ESL students attending the high school at the research-site reside in the suburbs of Obrero, Playita, Buena Vista, Puerto Nuevo, San Jose, and Santurce.

The focus of this qualitative case study was on motivators and demotivators of Dominican immigrant high school students who arrived in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English and have difficulties graduating from high school. Based on the findings of this project study, it is recommended that literacy teachers should use motivators coupled with instructional strategies and should be aware of demotivators. Additional instructional time to improve English proficiency is recommended for Dominican immigrant high school students to graduate from high school. Additional instructional time allowing for increased time for students to work with ESL teachers using the specially designed intensified support for ESL classes could help Dominican immigrant ESL students improve their English proficiency in order to graduate from high school in Puerto Rico.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

ESL students have difficulty acquiring English in order to succeed in the high school setting and graduate. Academic English is necessary for ESL students to acquire in high schools in which English is the primary language. State and district assessments

measuring student performance are given in English. Researchers have reported that high school grade point averages are a strong reflection of students' college or university readiness (Jimenez, Sargrad, Morales, & Thompson, 2016). Earning a high school diploma is not a guarantee that students will be successful in college (ACT, 2013). Students' academic performance depends on student characteristics (McNeish, Radunzel, Sanchez, 2015). Motivation and engagement lead to higher academic achievement (Kyllonen et al., 2014). High school students do not have the skills needed to be successful (ACT, 2013) and struggle academically (Karp & Bork, 2014). These students should show improvement in their literacy skills from attendance in English language programs (Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013).

Researchers have examined the effectiveness of interventions related to the acquisition of language skills (Reynolds, Temple, White, Ou, & Robertson, 2011). Students who participate in language interventions achieve higher rates of completion of high school (Reynolds et al., 2011). Intervention is effective at extending knowledge. Language interventions that focus on vocabulary knowledge may prevent later reading difficulties (Zucker, Solari, Landry, & Swank, 2013). Literacy teachers need to focus on literacy interventions over time because without interventions language gains may not be sustainable (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014). Kosutic (2017) stated that literacy teachers should balance knowledge and culture as the classroom environment continues to diversify. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. The definitions of terms are presented next.

Definition of Terms

To understand the concept of literacy, ESL students' acquisition of English, teaching strategies, and ESL program qualities, the following definitions were used:

After-school ESL programs: Baker (2013) stated that after-school programs provide students with social and intellectual contexts in areas such as music, dance, artwork, and field trips. The quality of after-school programs may enhance learning by providing learning opportunities to increase ESL students' collaboration and interests (Baker, 2013).

Demotivation: Students without clear goals become demotivated (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) reported external demotivational factors may include grammar based, teaching behavior, classroom environment, class content, materials utilized in class and low-test scores problems; the internal factors of demotivation include lack of self-confidence.

ESL programs: Programs used to facilitate learner interactions with each other and with native English speakers (O'Neill & Gish, 2008).

Motivation: Reutzel and Cooter (2011) defined motivation as an intrinsic or extrinsic response that influences learning and performance.

Significance of the Study Problem

The findings of this study are significant as data related to helping Dominican high school students who immigrated to Puerto Rico and develop English proficiency in order to graduate from high school will be provided to the local campus and district administrators. ESL students in Puerto Rico demonstrate low proficiency in English

(PRDOE, 2016) and motivation impacts the learning of these students. The deeper understanding of the student needs in ESL programming will support administrators to make adjustments to the local ESL program and to strengthen ESL professional development (PD) for teachers at the target site.

The motivation of the participating ESL students in the ESL program was to increase their proficiency in English. Immigrant Dominican high school students would benefit when they participate in an after-school ESL to increase their proficiency in English. Students who participate in language interventions achieve higher rates of completion of high school (Zucker et al., 2013). Without interventions, language gains may not be sustainable (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014). Motivation is a stimulus to learn a second language (Tabar & Rezaei, 2015). After-school programs provide students with learning opportunities and have a positive impact on ESL students (Baker, 2013) because these programs help students develop literacy skills (Short & Boyson, 2012) by motivating them (Conley & French, 2014; Karp & Bork, 2014). After-school programs are good interventions as they provided additional time for the ESL students to focus solely on English acquisition (Oh et al., 2014).

School district administrators could use the findings of this study to make decisions to allocate ESL teachers and teaching resources for the after-school ESL program. School administrators should offer remediation classes to help students (Mangan, 2017) because these students are underprepared for literacy classes (Hassel & Giordano, 2015). School administrators should encourage teachers to implement alternative literacy activities (Hamilton, 2015). School and district administrators should

provide resources and professional development training to teachers (Mertler, 2016; Milner et al., 2013) and to develop school activities to help students pass state and district assessments (Jones & Deutsch, 2013).

ESL teachers could use the findings of this study to help these students graduate from high school. Teachers should understand the cultural and learning styles of students (Manolis et al., 2013; McDougal, 2015). Teachers should develop class activities to assist students to understand complex texts (Roger, 2014). Teachers should prepare all students for college and careers (PRDOE, 2017) by making instructional decisions that can change students' performance (Airmail, 2016). Rolon (2013) found that using cooperative grouping is an effective strategy for teaching Spanish speaking students as it helps with English fluency and socialization.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) posited teachers could interact with students on an individual level to meet the individual needs of students. Teachers should use motivators within instructional strategies and should be aware of demotivators regarding students' proficiency in English. Teachers should focus on allowing ESL students to succeed academically and graduate to join the workforce or attend college.

Research Questions

The problem that I explored in this project study was that Dominican immigrant ESL high school students need to improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students regarding motivators and

demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site.

The research questions that guided this qualitative case study were:

(Research Question 1) RQ1: What are the perceptions and experiences of Dominican Immigrant ESL students regarding the motivators and demotivators of the ESL English proficiency classes?

(Research Question 2) RQ2: What resources or support do Dominican Immigrant students perceive would support their English language acquisition in the ESL classes?

Review of Literature

The success of educating immigrant students depends on the teaching strategies used to teach English (Griffiths, 2007). Teaching strategies and English as second language (ESL) programs may help immigrant students improve their literacy (King & De Fina, 2010; O'Neill & Gish, 2008). Education helps social integration (Bravo-Moreno, 2009). According to Nguyen and Godwyll (2010), to educate immigrant students, successful teaching strategies need to be focused on motivating them. For example, students may participate in after-school programs to improve their proficiency in English by focusing on the needs of these students (Shernoff, 2010).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the theory of second language acquisition developed by Krashen (Krashen, 1981). According to Krashen (1981), ESL is the process of language learning. ESL students may improve their proficiency in English by using cognitive activities, intense projects, and practical applications (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). ESL students should become active participants in their learning to

develop lifelong literacy skills. ESL students may improve their proficiency in literacy in a student-centered teaching environment, which is based on the Krashen conceptual model. Krashen (1981) developed the theory of second language acquisition. Krashen's theory focuses on motivation to learn a second language (Schutz, 2007). Krashen's theory could be used by literacy teachers to help ESL students learn English. Krashen's theory can also be used by literacy teachers to motivate ESL students (Lin, 2008).

Krashen (1981) maintained there are five main hypotheses regarding language acquisition and all of these hypotheses influence how ESL students learn. The five main hypotheses include the (a) Acquisition-Learning hypothesis, (b) Monitor hypothesis, (c) Natural order hypothesis, (d) Input Hypothesis, and (e) Affective domain hypothesis. The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis is the idea that students learn a new language through acquisition, by speaking naturally to others and being focused on the message being delivered and learning which is focused on the specific process of instruction in which the student is taught about English usage, grammar and is characterized as a conscious process. The monitor hypothesis is that the learner is using mediation between acquisition and learning to plan, edit and correct in circumstances in which the learner has adequate time to reflect on what is being said, time to think about the correctness of the language used and understands the rule from English that is being applied in the context in which the ESL student is using the English language. Students typically demonstrate use monitoring in different forms that may be connected with the personal qualities and how they view themselves. Krashen alludes to the under-user, over-user of the monitoring process being related to confidence, belief in one's self, and introvert or extrovert

students. Natural order hypothesis is the concept that grammatical structures are internalized at different ages and is dependent on exposure and conditions of the context in which the ESL student is acquiring English. Krashen identified this construct is one that should be rejected in the ESL classroom as it may inhibit English acquisition in the ESL learner. The input hypothesis focuses on the concept of natural acquisition of English through natural communicative input and that it advances individually depending on the stage of linguistic competence. Finally, the affective domain hypothesis focuses on the concepts of how affective variables such as self-confidence, motivation, and anxiety influence second language acquisition.

Given this framework's five hypotheses, the research questions are directly related to each hypothesis with a special emphasis on the affective filter hypothesis as it is directly related to the research question pertaining to motivators and demotivators. The other hypotheses relate to the research question two regarding resources and support needed in the ESL classrooms and how the ESL program is perceived to be delivered including the strategies used by teachers in the ESL setting.

The high school ESL target site classes that were the focus of the research project should be using the strategies that Krashen describes that promote successful acquisition of English (Krashen, 1981). Literacy teachers should be aware that ESL is a process of language learning and help ESL students to improve their proficiency in English. Literacy teachers can use intensive English projects in which students can work on practical applications of their English language literacy skills. Literacy teachers can also

use Krashen's suggestions not only to model instruction but also to coach students in order to improve their knowledge.

Review of the Broader Problem

Dominican students immigrate to Puerto Rico and attend English ESL classes. The problem is that Dominican immigrant ESL high school students need to improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students regarding motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. The literature review included several databases such as SAGE and ERIC. Search terms that I used to locate related peer-reviewed and other material were as follows: *theories for learning, Dominican immigrant ESL students, motivators and demotivators regarding English acquisition, and suggestions for improving the ESL students' instruction to address English acquisition, and qualitative research*. I selected peer-reviewed articles based on their generalizability and relevance to the project study.

Characteristics and Learning Styles of High School Students

School administrators should offer remediation classes to help students (Mangan, 2017). According to Hassel and Giordano (2015), students expressed frustrations of being underprepared for literacy classes. For examples, students stated that high school needed to better prepare students for writing (Hassel & Giordano, 2015). Literacy teachers should be aware of students' experiences in order to gain a better understanding of how these students learn (Bachman, 2013, Wilson-Strydom, 2010).

Teachers need to understand the importance of learning styles in order to accommodate students' academic needs (Glonek, 2013). For example, teachers can use accommodating learning style to help students make decisions and work in groups (Evans & Cool, 2011; Howard, 2013).

Immigrant ESL Students

According to Bolderston et al. (2008), second-language proficiency development takes approximately 3 to 5 years. [The jump between these sentences does not make sense. Please expand on the first idea before integrating the second.] ESL students are identified as economically disadvantaged (Alliance Afterschool, 2011). ESL students need learning opportunities to develop proficiency in English through interaction with peers and teachers (Bolderston et al., 2008). Dominican immigrant students are both ESL students and economically disadvantaged (Alliance Afterschool, 2011). ESL need to be provided with linguistically and culturally appropriate information (Nuñez & Kim, 2012). According to Gleason (2008), ESL students frequently avoid classroom participation because of their difficulties with the English language.

Motivation and Demotivation of ESL Students

Dominican immigrant students arrive in Puerto Rico with limited proficiency in the English language because they have not attended English classes and they are native Spanish speakers. Dominican students attend ESL classes. English classrooms can demotivate ESL students (Falout, Elwood, & Hood, 2009; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Hasegawa, 2004; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009).

Motivation could determine the achievement in the second language learning process. Motivation can influence the incidence of using learning strategies and the success in learning (Li & Pan, 2009). According to Bembenutty, Cleary, and Kitsantas (2013), the students' learning behaviors are connected to academic learning difficulties and low motivation.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) stated that *demotivation* reduces motivation. Jain and Sidhu (2013) identified anxiety, which is a demotivator, as a significant issue influencing language learning. Fallout (2012) identified demotivators in second language learners such as grammar-translation lessons or activities. Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) stated that grammar-translation, memorization of vocabulary, and grammar rules may be detrimental for students in terms of low and high stakes tests. According to Fallout (2012), students are frustrated when they do not understand what is beyond their level. Rastegar, Akbarzadeh, and Heidari (2012) stated that ineffective teaching methods, class atmosphere, negative test results, lack of self-confidence, and experiences of failure are external and internal factors that impact demotivation in ESL classes.

Students who display negative attitudes toward English learning may likely have greater difficulty acquiring the English language. Falout et al. (2009) stated that demotivation can negatively influence the students' attitudes toward learning. According to Falout (2012), demotivated learners of a second language react in different ways such as ignoring the teacher, disengaging from the learning and choosing not to perform well on assessments and tests. Cheng (2012) and Kikuchi (2015) reported that demotivated learners have negative attitudes toward learning. Students without clear goals become

demotivated (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). Grammar-based teaching and low-test scores are demotivator factors (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). Internal demotivator factors include lack of self-confidence (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). Examples include teaching methods and negative attitude toward the foreign language studied. The aforementioned demotivator factors affect students attending English courses.

ESL students experience learning difficulties in ESL courses (Halle et al., 2012). Academic challenges that ESL students experience include learning difficulties (Kanno & Cromley, 2010). Attitude toward language acquisition has an effect on learners' studies (Amuzie & Winke, 2009). ESL students are often placed into remedial literacy courses as a result of failure to make progress academically or in acquiring the English language (Koelsch, 2011).

ESL Teachers

Mak (2011) reported that all language professionals must work with students' needs. Jain and Sidhu (2013) stated that teachers should focus on improving students' language proficiency. ESL teachers' teaching strategies and knowledge of immigrants' cultural background impact students' learning. ESL teachers should focus on motivating ESL students with language acquisition because motivation impacts the degree to which the individual learns a new language (Gardner, 1985). Dixon, Zhao, Shin, Wu, Su, Burgess-Brigham, and Snow (2012) reported that adolescents succeed academically in the second language when teachers motivate students. Stewart (2010) agreed with Washburn (2008) that "avoiding confusion, frustration, and alienation are the first steps to welcoming ESL students" (para 3). Teachers should focus on making language

learners feel comfortable by ensuring that students understand most of the conversation in the classroom (Stewart, 2010). Lin (2008) stated that teachers should engage ESL learners through the use of learning activities that were “motivation-stirring” (p. 126). Lin (2008) also noted that teachers who understood the language acquisition process and had a more relaxing pedagogical approach could be more successful with ESL students. ESL students need to understand the importance of English (Liu & Huang, 2011). ESL teachers should motivate students by providing positive feedback while learning English. Liu and Zhang (2013) stated that students should be using English in a variety of learning activities.

Critical Literacy for English Language Acquisition

Critical literacy addresses students who are lagging behind their peers in literacy (Rogers, 2014). Teachers develop class activities to assist students to understand complex texts (Roger, 2014). Teachers should develop class activities such as writing and oral presentations for students to have meaningful experiences (Fisher & Frey, 2015). School administrators, who provided the resources and supports to ESL teachers should also encourage teachers to use critical literacy to better prepare high school students (Harper & Davis, 2012). Hamilton (2015) found that administrators who encouraged teachers to implement alternative literacy activities felt greater flexibility to implement creative ideas and alternate strategies with ESL students.

Teaching ESL Students

Effective teachers present content and use teaching methods to increase students' performance however they also encouraged higher-level thinking (Hill, 2014; Murphy & Torff, 2016). School and district administrators should provide resources and professional development training to teachers to help them increase their competencies in teaching (Milner, McGee, Pabon, & Woodson, 2013). School and district administrators should also help teachers adjust instructional goals to meet the students' needs by assessing students' progress during instruction (Mertler, 2016). Teachers should have knowledge of a students' diverse backgrounds (Turner, 2012). Creating an active learning, and diverse classroom facilitates ESL students' development of literacy skills by (Mertler, 2016).

Teaching Spanish-speaking Students

According to Rolon (2013), teachers who teach Spanish-speaking students should use cooperative learning groups. In order to help these students, effective teachers should allow students to use Spanish among themselves as learning partners (Rolon, 2013). Teachers should be aware of the importance of caring about these students (Comer, 2013). According to the Equity Center (2014), teachers should eliminate the use of language that appears to stereotype students.

High School Students and English Language Acquisition

Motivation is required when learning another language. Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) suggested placing learners in classes in terms of motivation and proficiencies in English. Matsumoto (2012) pointed out that the social factors between the learners' and target cultures play a significant role in the acquisition of a second language. Gholami (2012)

stated that teachers should facilitate students' acquisition of the language through social interaction.

In the society of the United States, education is considered the pathway to the American dream. Citizens from all over the world arrive in the United States looking for education opportunities (Solley, 2007). According to Calderon, Slavin, and Sanchez (2011), the population of ESL students in the United States has increased. English is a required subject from elementary school to university. Halle et al. (2012) affirmed that English is recognized worldwide as a language of technology, science, diplomacy, and business. Education reform has been focused on equity and learning opportunities for all students including ESL students (USDOE, 2010).

High School Students in the 21st Century

Students need to develop essential skills for learning, work, and citizenship in the 21st century (Murphy & Torff, 2016). For example, students need to be able to analyze information (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012). Students need to develop skills for the 21st century for success in college, career, and life (Magner, Soulé, & Wesolowski, 2011). Teachers should prepare all students for college and careers (PRDOE, 2017). Teachers need to focus on students' ability to access and analyze 21st century information (Paige, Smith, & Sizemore, 2015). Teachers can help students develop 21st century skills by making instructional decisions that can change students' performance (Airmail, 2016).

Teaching Immigrant ESL Students

Dominican immigrant students attend classes in Puerto Rico to learn English. According to Li and Pan (2009), motivation may influence students' English proficiency.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) created a model for second language motivational self-system and emphasized that previous learning experiences influences motivation of ESL learners. Falout (2012) mentioned the effect of the members of a group, which is a key factor in a motivational learning environment called socio-dynamic phase. Fallout (2012) also said that learners are human beings with their own realities, dreams, and desires who focus on individualism related to learning.

Strategies to Motivate ESL Students

Teaching strategies have an impact on ESL students. Falout et al. (2009) indicated that learners with negative experiences tend to fall into self-blame. ESL students benefit from teaching strategies where teachers teach content concepts by using thinking activities (Falout et al., 2009). ESL teachers should use learning activities. Teachers can help ESL students with thinking activities about their language learning experiences by focusing on these students' success or failures (Fallout et al., 2009). Fallout (2012) pointed out that teachers could work with students to identify motivational strategies and identify their effectiveness.

Nahavandi and Mukundan (2012) reported that students' growth must be the main objective of education. Nahavandi (2013) noted that teachers should use learning activities to help students with learning. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), elements that improve the chances of students' success are sufficient teacher preparation and assistance. Falout (2012) indicated that teachers could model adaptive processes in the classroom as role models. Such as Alderman (2004) and Schunk, Meece, and Pintrich (2012) posited teacher-to-teacher observations can improve teachers' teaching strategies.

According to García and Kleifgen (2010), viewing language as an internal built-in syllabus, learners conceive language as a complex system emerging from interpersonal interactions. Fallout (2012) stated that learners' language experiences motivate them. Students are motivated by engaging with the teacher and having a solid relationship in which they feel safe to explore and acquire English. Additionally, a variety of activities and strategies which serve to open up natural conversation in the second language has been found to be effective rather than the teacher lecturing to students or teaching about grammar.

English Language Acquisition Motivators

Literature on Dominican immigrant students is limited. Kikuchi (2015) examined the factors of demotivation among students. Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) recommended more research proficiencies in English. According to Degang (2010), students are found to be equally motivated in the way they learn English. Jehdo (2009) showed that motivation is instrumental and integrative. According to Ghadirzadeh, Hashtroudi, and Shokri (2012), causes of demotivation are lack of self-confidence. Cheng (2012) and Kikuchi (2009) suggested more research to be conducted on both demotivation and motivation. Demotivation can be reduced (Molavi & Biria, 2013). Hettiarachchi (2010) stated that learners' ability is affected by demotivation.

Linares, Diaz, Fuentes, and Acien (2009) found that student demotivation affected teachers. Internal and external factors influence the second language acquisition. Smokowski and Bacallao (2011) expressed that cultural minorities have reported negative experiences. Fallout et al. (2009) pointed out that demotivation can negatively influence

in a way the learner's attitudes and behaviors. Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) found that the classroom environment and teachers' strategies can be demotivators. Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) identified demotivation factors such as intrinsic motivation and test scores.

Lehikoinen and Leinonen (2010) confirmed that a grammar-based course is a negative aspect of demotivation on secondary students. Hirvonen (2010) explained that the classroom environment is a source of demotivation among immigrant students in Finland.

Recommendations of After-school Programs for English Language Acquisition

After-school programs provide students with social and intellectual contexts in areas like music, dance, artwork, field trips, and learning opportunities (Baker, 2013). The quality of after-school programs enhances learning by providing learning opportunities to increase ESL students' collaboration and interests (Baker, 2013). Additionally, there are different types of after-school programs developed to meet students' academic goals such as mentoring and extending the school day (Baker, 2013).

After-school programs help students to strengthen their communication skills by acquiring English to become well-rounded, active, and productive citizens (Bhattacharya & Quiroga, 2011). After-school programs give ESL students a chance to learn more to increase their proficiency in English. ESL programs provide students with much-needed support, not just academically, but also culturally and socially. Bolderston et al. (2008) found that after-school programs offer ESL students an opportunity to improve their proficiency in English. Dixon et al. (2012) stated that innovative strategies to teach second language learners should be based on socio-cultural theories and principles highlighting the importance of working to build strong relations between teachers and

students. Dixon et al. (2012) pointed out that the emphasis of ESL programs should be on helping the whole child. According to Lazarin (2008) the Center for American Progress recommended school-wide strategies for all ESL students to meet their unique needs at the secondary level. Lazarin (2008) suggested increasing the opportunities for students to obtain school credits.

According to Baker (2013), after-school programs have a positive impact on ESL students. Kim (2007) reported that after-school programs increase students' engagement in learning and improve students' self-efficacy. Short and Boyson (2012) reported that ESL programs help students develop literacy skills. Durlak, Weissberg, and Pachan (2010) stated that after-school programs promote positive social and behavioral outcomes.

High School ESL Students and English Language Acquisition

High school students do not have the skills needed to be successful (ACT, 2013) and struggle academically (Karp & Bork, 2014). High school grade point averages are a strong reflection of students' college or university readiness after high school (Jimenez, Sargrad, Morales, & Thompson, 2016). Students' academic performance depends on student characteristics (McNeish, Radunzel, Sanchez, 2015) and students' attributes (Arnold, Lu, & Armstrong, 2012). These students need to improve their literacy skills from attendance in language programs (Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013). Interventions related to the acquisition of language skills extend knowledge (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014; Kosutic, 2017; Zucker, Solari, Landry, & Swank, 2013).

High School ESL Teachers and English Language Acquisition

High school teachers need to better prepare students for writing (Bachman, 2013; Hassel & Giordano, 2015). Teachers need to understand the importance of learning styles (Glonek, 2013) because students learn more when their personal experiences aim toward their learning styles (Howard, 2013; McDougal, 2015). Negative attitudes of students toward English impact their learning (Cheng, 2012, Kikuchi, 2015).

Critical literacy addresses students who are lagging behind their peers in literacy (Rogers, 2014). Language class activities should be focused on coursework toward remedial core academic areas (Donaldson, 2016). Teachers should develop class activities such as writing and oral presentations for students to have meaningful experiences (Fisher & Frey, 2015). Teachers should encourage higher-level thinking (Murphy & Torff, 2016). School administrators should encourage teachers to use critical literacy to better prepare high school students (Hamilton, 2015; Harper & Davis, 2012).

High School Administrators and English Language Acquisition

After-school programs enhance learning by providing learning opportunities to increase ESL students' collaboration and interests (Baker, 2013). After-school programs increase students' engagement in learning and improve students' self-efficacy (Kim, 2007). High school literacy students need to have motivation (Conley & French, 2014) and to cope with difficult situations (Karp & Bork, 2014).

School administrators should offer remediation classes to help students (Mangan, 2017). School and district administrators should also provide resources and professional development training to teachers (Mertler, 2016). Students need to develop essential

skills for learning, work, and citizenship in the 21st century (Murphy & Torff, 2016) and be prepared for college and careers (Paige, Smith, & Sizemore, 2015). School administrators should encourage teachers to use critical literacy to better prepare high school students (Hamilton, 2015) and language classe activities focused on coursework toward remedial core academic areas (Donaldson, 2016). Son and Rueda (2015) reported that motivation is a vital factor in the learning of all students. Hockley and Thomas (2014) reported that technology such as video chats and video callsare helpful in the classroom. Davidson and Candy (2016) reported that teachers may integrate technology into their teaching strategies.

Professional Development for High School ESL Teachers

Professional development (PD) is offered to individuals to enhance their knowledge and skills (Koellner & Jacobs, 2015). PD enhances educational practices (Nabhania, O'Day Nicolas, & Bahous, 2014). PD activities are designed to apply new knowledge (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015).

For the after-school program, ESL teachers will attend PD to learn about learning communities (Patton, Parker, & Tannehill, 2015). ESL teachers through PD will engage with other teachers to learn from each other (Zepeda, Parylo, & Bengtson, 2014). ESL teachers learn how to foster learning where teachers will collaborate with other teachers on lesson planning (Kennedy, 2016).

School administrators have supported ESL teachers via PD sessions to which include content related to best teaching practices for ESL learners (Mazzotti, Rowe, Simonsen, Boaz, & VanAvery, 2018). School administrators have gained teacher inputu

to identify PD needs for teachers (Mandinach & Gummer, 2016). Via PD, ESL teachers have improved content knowledge of teacher ESL learners (Barrett, Cowen, Toma, & Troske, 2015). School administrators should mentor ESL teachers because mentoring is an essential component of teaching (Welton, Mansfield, Lee, & Young, 2015). Mentoring could be used to guide ESL teachers in improving teaching strategies (Augustine-Shaw & Hachiya, 2017). Effective mentoring provides teachers with opportunities for open communication with veteran teachers. When mentoring relationships are built on trust and openness researchers have found that the relationship is sustained as long as it is needed (Opengart & Bierema, 2015). Mentors have the responsibility to foster cooperative, trusting, and supportive relationships with the mentees (Hobbs & Stovall, 2015).

Implications

The problem is that Dominican immigrant ESL high school students need to improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school. I wanted to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. Thus, I explored Dominican immigrant ESL students' perceived motivators and demotivators regarding English acquisition, and suggestions for improving the ESL students' instruction to address English acquisition. Based on the themes that emerged, literacy teachers should use motivators within instructional strategies, and should be aware of demotivators regarding students' proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school. The findings of this study may result in social change by strengthening ESL

students' English and literacy support, thereby allowing ESL students to succeed academically, and graduate from high school thereby facilitating the opportunity to join the workforce or attend college.

Summary

Dominican immigrant high school students need to attend and pass English classes as a requirement to obtain a high school diploma. These students are in Puerto Rico and demonstrate little proficiency in English and low motivation. The educational services provided by the local DOE are limited and ESL teachers are not provided with enough teaching resources to teach these students.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. Through the research questions, I explored Dominican immigrant ESL students' perceived motivators and demotivators regarding English acquisition, and suggestions for improving the ESL students' instruction to address English acquisition in order to more deeply understand the perspectives and experiences of ESL students in order to address the problem in the local high school. The focus of this qualitative case study was on motivators and demotivators of Dominican immigrant high school students who arrived in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English and have difficulties graduating from high school. The conceptual framework was the theory of second language acquisition (Krashen, 1981). ESL students may improve their proficiency in English by using cognitive activities, intense projects, and practical applications (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). The high school ESL target site classes

that were the focus of the research project should be using the strategies that Krashen describes that promote successful acquisition of English.

The findings of this study shed light on how to help Dominican high school students who immigrated to Puerto Rico to graduate from high school. The motivation of the participating students was to increase their proficiency in English. Based on the findings of this project study, it is recommended that literacy teachers should use motivators coupled with instructional strategies and should be aware of demotivators. Additional instructional time to improve English proficiency is recommended for Dominican immigrant high school students to graduate from high school. Additional instructional time allowing for increased time for students to work with ESL teachers using the specially designed intensified support for ESL classes could help Dominican immigrant ESL students improve their English proficiency in order to graduate from high school in Puerto Rico. In Section 2, a description of the methodology for this study including data collection and analysis are presented.

Section 2: Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students regarding motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. This section of the project study contains specifics about the qualitative methodology used for this doctoral study. In Section 2, I discuss the participant sample, access procedures, methods for data collection, and data analysis methods, findings and themes which emerged from the findings. Data obtained through the study resulted in findings that may be used to reduce the gap in educational services identified as the problem of this study.

Research Design and Approach

The qualitative approach was appropriate for this study because my goal for the study was to obtain and analyze perceptions of Dominican immigrant students in regard to the ESL classes and services focused on developing English proficiency to graduate from high school at the target site.

Qualitative researchers use many data collection approaches including interviews, observations, archival document review, and artifact collection and then synthesize and analyze the data to build an understanding about a particular topic to inform practice (Lodico, Spaulding, & Spaulding, 2010). The qualitative design was the most suitable for this study as participants conveyed perceptions, impressions, experiences, thoughts and feelings related to the ESL services, development of English proficiency and graduation from high school. Thus, by collecting data through face-to-face interviews, participants

were using language to respond to the questions of the protocol, thus making a qualitative approach most suitable for this project study (Creswell, 2012).

The problem that I focused on in this project study was that Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) has not allocated the instructional resources to ESL teachers in order to support Dominican immigrant high school students develop English proficiency. English proficiency is required at the target site in order to graduate. Developing English proficiency is considered a literacy need for immigrant students (Bolderston et al. (2008). To address the problem and purpose of the study, I used the following research questions to gather data to refine the ESL services for Dominican immigrant students:

RQ1. What are the perceptions and experiences of Dominican Immigrant ESL students regarding the motivators and demotivators of the ESL English proficiency classes?

RQ2. What resources or support do Dominican Immigrant students perceive would support their English Language acquisition in the ESL classes?

Qualitative Case Study Design

I used a qualitative case design used to understand phenomena related to the English proficiency of Dominican immigrant students and graduation from high school (Lodico et al., 2010). Specifically, this I focused on how Dominican immigrant students, who attend ESL classes to achieve English proficiency as a requisite to obtaining a high school diploma, perceive the motivators and demotivators of the ESL classes and services at the target site.

Using a qualitative case study approach, I was able to gather the perceptions and experiences of Dominican immigrant ESL students regarding the motivators and demotivators of the ESL classes necessary to graduate from high school. I examined a bounded system that consisted of Dominican immigrant ESL students who were taking classes at the local target high school in Puerto Rico. Case study research is often used to seek deeper understanding of a phenomenon through explanatory questions such as “how”, “what”, and “why” (Lodico et al., 2010). I conducted a qualitative case study to gain insight and in-depth understanding of Dominican immigrant ESL students perceptions related to the phenomenon (Lodico et al., 2010).

Justification of Research Design

Through quantitative methods, the researcher tries to determine if a relationship exists between an independent variable and a dependent variable (Creswell, 2012). I did not collect numerical data and did not have independent and dependent variables; therefore, I considered quantitative methods.

The purpose of a grounded theory is to “generate or discover a theory” of an exacting process or action providing a framework for further research (Creswell, 2012), p. 63). I was not seeking to create a theory about the Dominican immigrant students’ ESL acquisition. Therefore, I did not select grounded theory for this study. I also did not select an ethnographic design because the focus was not on an entire cultural group (Creswell, 2012). A narrative study design describes the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals (Creswell, 2012). For the purpose of this study, I did not gather or interpret the stories of the participants (Creswell, 2012).

For the purpose of this project study, a source of my case study evidence was interviews with the participants. I conducted the interviews by guided conversations with the participants. I selected interviews to give me full access to the details of the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

Participants

Population and Sampling

The setting for this project study was one public high school located in Puerto Rico. I selected the target high school due to the large enrollment of immigrant students arriving from the Dominican Republic. According to the senior district administrator at the study site, the target high school's grade report card showed low achievement of ESL students in English classes.

According to the senior district administrator at the study site, at the target site, the dropout rate for the Dominican immigrant students was between 7% and 8% annually and the graduation rate was 30%. The target high school site had one school director and 27 teachers. Three ESL teachers taught English.

The total enrollment for the academic year 2014-2015 was 157 students in Grade 10, 109 students in Grade 11, and 93 students in Grade 12, of which only 30% graduated. The high school population for this project study was 371 students, of which 221 were girls and 150 were boys. Of the 371 students, 38 students were Hispanic not Puerto Rican, which refers to Dominicans students who received free-or-reduced meals and were

identified as special education students. Purposeful sampling was used as the participants were intentionally selected to participate in the research study (Creswell, 2012).

Criteria for Selection of Participants

The selection criteria included Dominican ESL students who were (a) from the Dominican Republic, (b) taking ESL classes, and (c) were 18 years old or older. The director at the high school identified participants from the 38 Dominicans students who met the selection criteria. I obtained a list of participants meeting the eligibility criteria from the director of the high school. From the 38 Dominicans students, eight students returned signed consent forms to the director, therefore the total participant sample for the project study was eight ESL students who met the selection criteria and agreed to participate in the study. The 8 participants were four males and four females who were 19 years old.

Participant Justification

The selection criteria were important to collect rich descriptions of the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. My intent was to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon. I used purposeful sampling and selected participants who provided me with rich information about the topic.

Participant Access

The school administrator at the research site had the authority to approve the research study. A letter of cooperation was hand-delivered to the school administrator requesting approval to conduct the study. The letter of cooperation contained information

regarding the purpose of the study, data collection, and an overview of the project study. A copy of my letter of invitation, confidentiality agreement, and notice of consent were hand-delivered to the administrator responsible for research. Permission from the school administrator was obtained to have access to the setting and the participants. This administrator used the selection criteria I provided for participants and identified 38 Dominican immigrant students in Grades 10-12 who met the criteria as participants for the study. After the approval of permission from the school administrator, a formal letter was also personally delivered to each research participant. The formal letter included the purpose of the study, time for each interview, and a statement that the participation was voluntary. I contacted the 38 potential participants by telephone to schedule a meeting at the high school after-school hours at the library of the target site in a conference room. During the meeting I introduced the purpose of the study, the data collection plan, and the importance of the research. I provided each participant with a copy of the consent form containing information about my background as an educator, the objectives and purpose of the study, and explained the interview process. I asked each participant to deliver the signed consent form to the office of the administrator if they were interested in participating in the study. I also obtained IRB approval from Walden University (01-15-15-0183647). All notes and recordings were kept and locked with only the researcher having access to the data.

Researcher-Participant Relationship

As the primary instrument for gathering data, my goal was to establish a trustworthy relationship with the participants in the study. My goal was to make each

participant feel comfortable sharing their responses to the interview protocol with me. I provided them with a printed copy of the protocol so they could read the questions along with me as I asked them. I explained the use of a protocol and how it would be used to structure our interview in addition to the process of probing during the interview to glean more information regarding specific responses.

I reviewed the notice of consent again with each participant and provided them a copy for their files. The informed consent included the purpose and nature of the study, why they were asked to participate, and how the data analysis results would be shared with all participants. I reminded the participant prior to the interview that they could withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty or consequence for not participating. I reminded them that I would be taking notes during the interview and I strived to maintain eye contact and monitored my nonverbal body language throughout the interview.

Researcher biases concerning the study were controlled by following the interview protocols. I explained to each participant that my role as a researcher was that of a listener and the primary instrument for gathering data. During the interviews, I was attentive to the participants to establish rapport and to assure participants that the information shared was valuable to the study. I was aware of my personal experiences, biases, and assumptions and addressed them professionally not to impede the data collection process.

During the interviews, I worked with the participants to develop a researcher-participant relationship. In order to establish a working relationship with the participants,

I submitted my proposal to the school administrator responsible for research. I explained the nature of the study and how data were collected. I obtained permission to visit the research site in order to meet with the participants. After I obtained permission, I set up an appointment with each participant who wished to participate in the study. During each meeting with each participant, I explained the project study and answered all the questions they had about the study. The participants were given the agreement form. I finalized the interview schedule with each participant and held the interview on their convenient time. I conveyed respect to every participant and thanked them for their time commitment and participation in the study. I wanted to collect rich data from the participant sample which included authentic responses from the participants.

Protection of Participants

Researchers must emphasize the value of ensuring that their participants understand the study fully and freely give their consent to take part in the study (Koulouriotis, 2011). The researcher must respect participants who are non-native English speakers (Koulouriotis, 2011).

The participants signed a consent letter. The documents regarding this study were written in Spanish, which is the primary language of the Dominican participants. The interviews were conducted in the participants' native language.

I emphasized to each participant that participation was voluntary and that overall protection was a priority throughout the duration of this study. Before IRB approval, I completed the training *Protecting Human Research Participants*. It was noted in my consent and reiterated before the interview that any participant could withdraw from the

study at any given time. A pseudonym was assigned to each participant in order to protect the participants' identities prior to, during, and after data collection when the findings of the project study were reported. I used letter "P" for participant followed by a corresponding number for each interviewee to code the data to the transcription. For example, the first participant was P1 without revealing their name. I was the only person who knew the identities of each participant. The identity of the participants was not used in the findings or revealed at any time to district administrators.

Before data collection for this study, I obtained a certificate from The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research in order to fully understand the ethical protection of all participants. My role at the research site did not directly influence my interpretation of participants' responses. I explained to each participant the objectives, expectations, and procedures of the data collection process. I also explained to the participants that they had the right to refuse to participate in the research project study at any time without any negative consequences or repercussions. Participants were informed that a draft of the results and the final findings of the project study would be made available at a future date.

As a novice researcher, I needed to protect the participants from the right to privacy. The participants were asked to sign an informed consent form and were assured of the confidentiality of their identity. The participants were informed that the collected data were protected and were only used for the research study. I was the only person who had access to the data. The identities of individual participants were not included in the

report. Personal information outside of the research project were not disclosed.

Codes were used instead of names to conceal the participants' identity.

All interview transcripts were stored electronically in my house in a password-protected file on my personal computer. All files containing the interview transcripts were encrypted. All nonelectric data were stored securely in a secure desk located in my home office. Data will be kept secure for 5 years, per the protocol of Walden University. After 5 years, I will destroy all data.

Data Collection

Qualitative data consists of interview-based direct quotations, opinions, knowledge, experiences, perceptions, and observation-based descriptions of actions and behaviors (Merriam, 2009). The data collection process for this study consisted of semistructured one-on-one interviews, using the open-ended interview protocol, and the research journal where I kept notes during the interviews. The semistructured one-on-one interviews, researcher journal, and member checking added to the descriptive nature of this qualitative case study analysis (Merriam, 2009).

Interviewing the participants provided a significant aspect of data to understand the motivators and demotivators of Dominican immigrant ESL students to develop English proficiency in order to graduate from high school. The interview protocol was used to inform participants of the initial questions that were asked during the semistructured interviews (Lodico et al., 2010). The interview questions were values and opinion based or experience and behavior questions (Merriam, 2009). I informed the participants that their names will be kept confidential in order to protect their anonymity

and elicit open, meaningful, and honest responses. I informed the participants that they could withdraw from the interview or refuse to answer questions that made them uncomfortable at any time without repercussions.

Interviews were the primary means of data collection for this qualitative case study. I developed the student interview protocol. I used Lynch's Interview Guide Language program evaluation: Theory and practice (1996) to develop the interview protocol, which contained 10 open-ended questions. ESL content experts provided me with suggestions regarding my interview protocol to promote clarity. The questions were revised per the content experts' feedback. This expert review panel helped me increased validity and reliability. The interview questions did not include personal or demographic information such as gender, or age.

Interview questions 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10 addressed the first research question about the motivating and demotivating factors for the acquisition of English. Interview questions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9 answered the second research question regarding suggestions of the participants for improving learning of English. I conducted one-on-one interviews with eight participants during non-instructional periods. I asked the eight participants open-ended interview questions and followed the protocol of questions. The interviews occurred at a place and time agreed upon to satisfy the participants' varying schedules. The interviews were held after-school hours at the school library in a private conference room. Having 8 participants increased the accuracy of the research study (Yin, 2014). Semi structured, one-on-one interviews allowed me the opportunity to ask open-ended questions. The participants had the opportunity to ask me questions during the interview

session. The interviews were between 35 and 50 minutes per participant. I kept field notes during the interviews that were audiotaped with the permission of the parents of each participant. According to Merriam (2009), to record interview data, interviews should be audio taped in addition to taking notes to ensure accuracy is preserved for analysis. While conducting the interviews, I recorded and transcribed all interviews immediately to ensure accuracy, maintain ethical standards, and to minimize researcher.

I met with the potential participants between April 1, 2015 and April 16, 2015. I collected the signed consent forms between April 17, 2015 and April 20, 2015 and made appointments with the participants for the interviews that took place at the school library in a private room to explain my study and the procedure for the interviews. I conducted the semistructured one-on-one interviews between May 1, 2015 and May 16, 2015. The interviews were transcribed between May 17, 2015 and May 25, 2015. The interview transcripts were in Spanish and I translated them into English between May 26, 2015 and May 31, 2015.

Role of the Researcher

I have been an ESL teacher for over 20 years working with Dominican immigrant students. I am a high school principal in Puerto Rico. I encourage my teachers and staff members to meet the academic needs of these students because I have the passion for seeing them graduate and be successful members of society.

My role as a school principal allowed me to establish a good working relationship with the school administrators at the research site. My current role did not affect the data collection because I did not know the participants and I was interested in their

perceptions to answer the research questions. The participants remained anonymous because I did not use their real names in the project study. Possible biases included my knowledge about ESL students. The responses of the participants varied.

Sufficiency of Data Collection

The 8 participants, 4 males and 4 females, was a large sample for this qualitative case study. I believe there was a depth of inquiry. I considered the amount of data needed to reach the saturation for the credibility of the findings. Thus, for this project study, 8 participants were sufficient to represent a rich description of their perceptions of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. Also, my interviews were sufficient to collect qualitative data. With the collected data, I developed a rich description of the participants' input and recommendations for the after-school program. After transcribing and organizing my data, I conducted a preliminary exploratory analysis to acquire a general sense of the data, collect ideas, consider the organization of the data, and identified that data collected were sufficient.

Data Analysis

The focus of this qualitative case study was on motivators and demotivators of Dominican immigrant high school students who arrived in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English and have difficulties graduating from high school. Based on the findings of this project study, it is recommended that literacy teachers should use motivators coupled with instructional strategies and should be aware of demotivators. Additional additional instructional time to improve English proficiency is recommended for Dominican immigrant high school students to graduate from high school. Additional

instructional time allowing for increased time for students to work with ESL teachers using the specially designed intensified support for ESL classes could help Dominican immigrant ESL students improve their English proficiency in order to graduate from high school in Puerto Rico.

I organized the interview transcripts in order to answer the research questions. I used the interview transcripts in Spanish and started the qualitative data analysis as a systematic process to understand the data from the interviewees. During the data analysis process, I used brackets and circles to identify common quotes and highlighted commonalities in each response to each interview question. I made connections between ideas and concepts.

I organized the interview transcripts using Atlas.ti 7 and conducted a line-by-line thematic analysis. Initial themes and categories that emerged. Once the categories were identified, I searched for themes, patterns, and relationships within the data. I coded the interview data into themes under category within each research question. I included any personal reflections and field notes written during each interview. I invited via email each participant to review the findings for accuracy and to validate my interpretations. The participants reviewed the findings for accuracy and validated my interpretation.

I color-coded each interview transcript. I used color blue to highlight motivators and color red to highlight demotivators. All highlighted comments were copied and pasted to two different spreadsheets, allowing me to group all information about each of the two research questions together. I reviewed each spreadsheet multiple times to

determine themes and common threads through the data. Data were then sorted by themes.

Evidence of Quality of Data

Member checking permits the researcher “to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final draft report or specific descriptions of themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate” (Creswell, 2012, p. 196). I conducted member checking at the school library in a private room. Member checking was conducted between May 25, 2015 and May 31, 2015 and after-school hours at the school library. Each member checking meeting was about 45 minutes. Member checking was conducted for the trustworthiness of my study and contributed to the credibility of my findings. Thus, member checking was used to validate the accuracy of my interview data and findings. This provided assurance as to the accuracy of the data collected in the interviews. The participants had no revisions after reviewing their individual confidential interview transcriptions were completed.

In conclusion, interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded by common code names and code categories for analysis. In order to increase credibility and validity of the findings, I used triangulation of multiple sources of data such as interviews, researcher journal, and member checking.

Discrepant Cases

In dealing with discrepant cases, literature and valid findings supported this study. Discrepant cases were considered. The discrepant cases could help the school and district administrators with decision-making processes regarding after-school ESL programs.

Discrepant cases will also assist policymakers with intensified support for ESL classes. The participants referred to the instructional strategies of the literacy teachers. For example, literacy teachers did not explain new vocabulary, or the explanations did not help students understand the meaning of new vocabulary. Some literacy teachers did not explain new vocabulary at all. Other teachers used the Socratic method to teach without engaging students. Some literacy teachers spoke English and Spanish and the explanations they provided to students in their native language, which is Spanish, helped them understand the lesson.

Some participants questioned why teachers did not use other teaching activities. Some participants also expressed frustration because literacy teachers did not explain the lesson and students did not understand what the teacher was teaching. Participants reported that teachers did not help them improve their speaking skills. Participants also reported that teachers did not help them to improve their English proficiency. Participants questioned why teachers were not using visual aids or computers to teach English.

Dominican immigrant students, who have recently arrived in Puerto Rico, need to be taught in a flexible teaching environment where teachers use effective ESL strategies for these students to improve their English language proficiency. Teaching strategies could include student-centered instruction in ESL classes for high school students who have not taken English classes before. These high school students need to be motivated to be successful in their ESL classes. Student motivation and engagement in the classroom and technology integration into the curriculum help Dominican immigrant students learn English.

Examples of discrepant cases, participants 1-7 stated, “Teacher did not explain new words.” Participants 2-7 stated that “the teacher is just teaching.” Participant 6 stated, “I do not understand what the teacher is teaching.” Participant 7 stated, “Why the teacher does not use other teaching activities.” Participant 5 stated, “Explanations in Spanish help me but this teacher refuses to translate English into Spanish.”

Data Analysis Results

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. The focus of this qualitative case study was Dominican immigrant high school students who arrive in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English and have difficulties graduating from high school. The research questions that guided this qualitative case study were:

RQ1. What are the perceptions and experiences of Dominican Immigrant ESL students regarding the motivators and demotivators of the ESL English proficiency classes?

RQ2. What resources or support do Dominican Immigrant students perceive would support their English Language acquisition in the ESL classes?

Findings

This section contains a summary of findings for the two central research question.

Theme 1: Instructional Strategies Should Include Motivators When Teaching

Dominican ESL Students

Theme 1 emerged from the responses to Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10

regarding motivators and demotivators for the acquisition of English as experienced by Dominican students in Puerto Rico. In order to answer the first research question regarding motivating and demotivating factors impacting Dominican students' acquiring of English as a second language in Puerto Rico, an interview protocol was used (Appendix B). Responses to Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10 addressed this research question. The participants responded to what was liked the most in English as a second language classes. All participants stated that literacy teachers should include motivators' in their instructional strategies when teaching Dominican ESL students. These students appreciated the way teachers explained the lessons using motivating questions such as "how may I help you?" All participants were more motivated when literacy teachers were bilingual speaking English and Spanish. Most participants stated that talking about jobs and job-related vocabularies motivated them stay focused on the lesson. Participants 1, 3-6, and 8 appreciated the teachers who took extra time to help students understand the lesson. Another motivating factor was the teachers' respect toward Dominican students (participants 2-5, 6, and 7). Another motivating factor was the teachers' understanding of the Dominican culture. Literacy teachers who included interesting lesson activities in their instructional strategies helped Dominican ESL students understand the lesson. Also, literacy teachers who included pronunciation activities with songs in their instructional strategies helped Dominican ESL students understand the lesson. Literacy teachers need to motivate these students to learn English by using positive comments such as "great example" and "good work" in order for these students to improve their pronunciation.

Literacy teachers motivate Dominican ESL students by giving them extra time to understand a lesson. Literacy teachers also motivate Dominican ESL students by assigning students to groups to work on a common assignment for students to interact with others to practice English. For example, Participant 3 stated, “My teacher shall to be more sensitive toward students like us.” Participant 4 responded, “Dominicans have not taken English classes.” Participant 5 said, “We need more conversations in class.” Participant 6 stated, “We need more verbal activities in class.” Participant 7 responded, “computer programs could be used in the classroom.”

Participant 1 stated, “I feel that I learn English better when the teacher integrates technology in the classroom.” Participant 2 stated, “Technology helps me learn English.” Participant 3 stated, “When I learn English and about technology, then I may have a better job”, Participant 4 stated, “When my teachers use educational tools, I learn English faster.” Participant 5 stated, “Tablets and iPods are helping me in learning ESL.” Participant 6 stated, “The teacher uses online databases for me to learn more vocabulary.” Participant 7 stated, “Online sources help me master pronunciation. Participant 8 stated, “With technology, the teacher takes more time to help me out to complete the work done in class.”

The participants’ responses regarding instructional strategies that include motivaors were: Participant 1 responded, “The way my teacher explained the instructions was what I like the most.” Participant 1 also responded, “I have learned. Thanks, the teacher takes extra time to help me understand what is given in class. Frequently, the teacher explains to me in Spanish.” Participant 2 responded, “The teacher takes more

time to help me out to complete the work done in class”. Participant 3 responded, “The teacher treat me with respect and understanding. Participant 6 responded, “The teachers gave us very interesting activities. I liked the class because the teacher gave us opportunities to practice English.” Participant 8 responded, “The teacher helps me with my pronunciation and uses songs and asks us to watch TV programs in English”.

Participant 2 responded, “The way the teacher helps me in the class motivates me to learn English.” Participant 4 responded, “I feel motivated when my teacher tells me that I am doing great; especially, when my pronunciation sounds better.” Participant 5 responded, “I remember when the teacher told us in class that she won’t permit comments when any of us make mistakes, so that makes me feel confident and comfortable.” Participant 7 responded, “My motivation to keep attending English classes is my goal to become an engineer. I need to become fluent speaking English. I also plan to move to U.S.” Participant 1 responded, “My English teacher motivates me when she helps me and gives me time to understand the theme of the day.” Participant 4 responded, “I feel motivated when the teacher gives us teamwork, which helps me to interact with others and to learn more vocabulary and be confidence when using the language.”

In conclusion, excerpts from the interviews included motivators such as explaining the lesson. For example, Participant 1 stated, “The way my teacher explains the instructions, motivates me.” Participant 2 stated, “Explanations motivate me.” Participant 4 stated, “The teacher takes extra time to help me understand what is taught in class.” Participant 5 stated, “Frequent explanations in Spanish help me.” Participant 7 stated, “I like when the teacher gives different learning activities to learn English.” Thus,

Participants 1, 3, 4, and 5 stated that they try to learn but they I need help. To motivate Dominican students to acquire English in Puerto Rico, teachers need to include (a) integration of technology in the classroom, (b) use of educational tools such as tablets and iPods, (c) use of online databases, and (d) use English learning blogs.

The discrepant cases could help the school and district administrators with decision-making processes regarding intensified support for ESL classes. Participant 1 stated, "I did not like how my teacher explains new words." Participant 2 stated, "Explanations of new words are not good." Participant 3 stated, "This teacher does not explain anything." Participant 4 stated, "The teacher is just teaching." Participant 5 stated, "Explanations in Spanish help me but this teacher speaks only English." Participant 6 stated, "I do not understand what the teacher is teaching." Participant 7 stated, "Why the teacher does not use other teaching activities." Participant 8 stated, "I am not helped to speak English." Thus, positive motivators included integration of technology in the classroom. Technology such as Tablets and iPods and online databases help ESL students. Literacy teachers need to focus on motivators and on learning opportunities for ESL students. Teachers should understand the learning styles of students and modify instruction based on students' learning styles. Teachers should use class activities to assist ESL students with writing. Teachers should use teaching methods that increase students' learning.

Theme 2: Instructional Strategies Should Not Include Demotivators When Teaching Dominican ESL Students

All participants stated that literacy teachers should not include demotivators in

their instructional strategies when teaching Dominican ESL students. All participants were less motivated when literacy teachers were speaking only English. Participants 2, 4, 5-8 did not appreciate those teachers who did not help students understand the lesson. A demotivating factor was when teachers did not understand the Dominican culture.

Another demotivating factor is when a literacy teacher makes fun of students' mistakes. Another demotivating factor is when these students attend classes with students who are native English speakers. Participants expressed demotivation when other students make negative comments or discriminative expressions to these students who have never taken English classes. Examples of demotivators stated by the participants were..... Participants 1 and 4 stated that they have no interest in attending an English class when they do not understand the lesson or when the class materials are not interesting enough.”

Participant 5 responded, “This English class is not what I expected it to be.”

Participant 1 stated, “I do not like long assignments.” Participant 2 stated, “For me to find meaning, I need to complete written exercises”, Participant 3 stated, “I do not get enough feedback for my errors.” Participant 4 stated, “I am disappointed when I get limited feedback.” Participant 5 stated, “I do not find the teaching materials important.” Participant 6 stated, “I need good learning materials.” Participant 7 stated, “I feel I do not learn enough.” Participant 8 stated, “I would like to see more verbal and written assignments.”

Participant 2 responded, “I have gone through a lot of negative experiences in class, when some of my classmates laugh at me because of my mistakes”. Participant 6 responded, “When the teacher corrects me in front of the class, I feel bad and

embarrassed, because I do not understand English.” Participant 8 responded, “I am very shy.” Participant 3 said, “Teachers should be more sensitive toward students like us. In school, I know we are a huge group of Dominicans, and she knows that we never ever took an English class before.” Participant 5 responded, “Keep in class conversations short.” Participant 2 responded, “We do not use iPods, Internet, Wi-Fi, and some other technologies.”

Participant 1 responded, “We need more time. We need more teamwork.”

Participant 4 responded, “We need time to practice and to learn.” Participant 5 responded, “I feel we do not have enough time to practice nor sufficient experiences to speak during class.” Participant 7 responded, “Teacher does not give us the opportunity to speak with our partners more frequently during class.”

Participant 1 responded, “What makes me lose interest to attend my English class is that most of the time I feel lost in space. I do not understand anything and do not see class materials to be interesting enough.” Participant 3 responded, “When I make mistakes people around me laugh and make comments. For them it is funny but for me it is frustrating.” Participant 4 responded, “I do not attend my English class when the class becomes difficult for me.” Participant 5 responded, “Our class is not what I expected from the very beginning.” Participant 6 responded, “When classmates make comments and laugh of other people’s participation or responses I always get mad.” Participant 7 responded, “I hate when my teacher gives long assignments to find meanings or complete written exercises.”

In conclusion, excerpts from the interviews include demotivators. For example,

Participant 3 stated, “When the teacher does not explain well a lesson, I have learned very little.” Participant 8 stated, “I feel bad when I have to give a response but I cannot because English is my second language.” Participants 1, 3, 4, and 5 stated, “I try to learn but I need help.” Participants 2, 5, 6, and 8 stated, “I have gone through a lot of negative experiences in class when some of my classmates laugh or make negative comments because of my mistakes.” Most participants stated that certain teaching strategies increase negative feelings toward learning English.

The discrepant cases could help the school and district administrators with decision-making processes regarding ESL classes. Participant 1 stated, “I did not like how my teacher explains new words.” Participant 2 stated, “Explanations of new words are not good.” Participant 3 stated, “This teacher does not explain anything.” Participant 4 stated, “The teacher is just teaching.” Participant 5 stated, “Explanations in Spanish help me but this teacher speaks only English.” Participant 6 stated, “I do not understand what the teacher is teaching.” Participant 7 stated, “Why the teacher does not use other teaching activities.” Participant 8 stated, “I am not helped to speak English.”

Thus, demotivators included assessments. Teachers’ feedback needs to be specific regarding the learning of English. Learning materials have to be relevant to the curriculum and to include verbal and written practical assignments. Teachers should understand the cultural and learning styles of students. Teachers should use class activities to assist ESL students. Teachers should help students develop literacy and essential skills.

Theme 3: Intensified Support Could Help Dominican Immigrant Students Improve Their Proficiency in English

All participants reported that literacy teachers and school administrators should support Dominican immigrant students by creating a comfortable learning environment. All participants also stated that challenges in learning English existed in every class. Most of the participants reported that more time is needed to learn English. For example, the extra time can be offered after school hours between Monday and Friday or on Saturdays or 3 times a week, for 2 hours daily. After-school ESL programs should be designed for students who have never taken English classes in their home countries.

All participants stated that an ESL program shall be delivered after regular school hours to students who have not taken English classes because these students need more time to learn English. All participants also stated that at least 2 hours of English classes after regular school hours will help them improve their literacy skills. Participants 1, 2-4, 6-8 stated that Dominican students need more time to practice English.

Literacy teachers need to be more sensitive to different cultures. Literacy teachers should focus on verbal activities in order to help Dominican students improve their proficiency in English. Literacy teachers should use interactive activities for Dominican students to focus on pronunciation and speaking through class group conversations.

The after-school literacy teachers should integrate technology into the intensified support for ESL classes. All participants stated that literacy teachers should use computer programs in the classroom. For example, Participant 2 stated, “iPods are helpful in the classroom.” Participant 3 responded, “There are interactive ESL computer programs that

could be beneficial in the English class.” Participants 1 and 4-8 stated that the use of tablets and video cameras are helpful in ESL classes.

Literacy teachers should focus on teamwork and role play. For example, participants wished their teachers involved students in more group practical exercises. The focus of the lesson should be on the interests of the students. For example, participant 2 stated, “We need time to practice to learn English.” Participants 1 and 3-8 responded that teachers shall give students opportunities to practice speaking English.

The responses of the participants confirmed that Dominican immigrant students are not supported by teachers. Therefore, English classes must be conducted with the focus on helping these students to improve their proficiency in English. Examples to improve proficiency in English include pronunciation, group conversations, and interactive activities through education technology.

Dominican immigrant students reported being lost in regular ESL classes. These students expressed interest in having literacy teachers who understand their culture and help them to develop reading and writing skills to compete in the 21st century. These students need more time and motivational strategies to learn English.

Summary of Themes

The participants made suggestions for improving their learning of English as a second language. Responses to Interview Questions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were used for this theme. Suggestions for the Puerto Rico Department of Education to improve the learning of English included:

Participant 1 responded, “I suggest starting an after-school program for students

like us, who have never taken English classes.” Participant 2 responded, “I would suggest offering additional time after school to help us learn English. I would say that after-school hours or weekends can help us.” Participant 3 responded, “I suggest to allow us to use computer programs to learn English after- school hours in the school library.” Participant 5 responded, “I will propose that instead of 50 minutes of class, the school must offer at least 2 hours of English classes after- school hours.” Participant 8 responded, “I recommend more time for English class after- school hours, with interactive activities leaving apart the writing and focusing on pronouncing and speaking.”

Participant Suggestions for ELL Teachers’ Interactions with Students

Participant 3 responded, “I recommend to my teacher to be more sensitive toward students like us. In school, I know we are a huge group of Dominicans, and she knows that we never ever took an English class before.” Participant 5 responded, “I would suggest stopping writing and writing. I recommend keeping conversations in class.” Participant 7 responded, “We need more verbal activities in the school and out of the school. I know of some excellent computer programs that could be used in the classroom.” Participant 8 responded, “I think that if my teacher teaches the English class fully in English, and students must be forced to pay attention and try to use the language.”

Participant Suggestions for Technology Use

Participant 2 responded, “It would be nice to use iPods, Internet, Wi-Fi, and some other technologies.” Participant 3 responded, “There are interactive computer programs

that could be beneficial in the English class.” Participant 8 responded, “I recommend the use of tablets, iPods, microphones, video cameras, and audiovisual tools.”

Participant Suggestions for ELL Teachers to Promote Student Learning and Engagement

Participant 1 responded, “I think we need more time. We need more teamwork. I enjoy when the teacher gives us a role play and we delivered the themes working as a group.” Participant 2 responded, “We need teachers who involve us in a practical exercise. I mean, if a teacher gives us assignments that really interest us, we can make an effort to try to understand better.” Participant 2 also responded, “If we have the opportunity to interchange thoughts and ideas with people coming from the US, so we can learn pronunciation.” Participant 4 responded, “I think that we need an expanded time to practice and to learn. Sometimes, I feel lost, because Puerto Rican students have had more time learning English than us. We are just starting.” Participant 5 responded, “I feel we do not have enough time to practice nor sufficient experiences to speak during class. She speaks English very nice and I would like to do the same.” Participant 7 responded, “I want my teacher to give us the opportunity to speak with our partners more frequently during class. We do not practice enough.”

Participant Suggestions for Positive Learning Experiences

Participant 1 responded, “I used to go to the beach often. I have had the chance to dialogue with tourists coming from the U.S. It has helped me a lot.” Participated 1 responded, “I have felt good doing that, would be great to have people who speak English in our class.” Participant 2 responded, “Having someone whose first language is English

would help us much. It would help us feel confidence when trying to use the language.” Participant 3 responded, “I think I need that kind of experience, because I usually feel scared when someone talks to me in English. It would be positive.” Participant 4 responded, “I am always afraid when an English-speaking person talks to me or ask me a question. I do not have enough vocabulary to keep a conversation but anyway I would like to learn some day to speak English.” Participant 5 responded, “Would be beneficial for us to have conversations with people who speak English in class. Puerto Ricans speak very well in class and our teacher should develop activities that could encourage us to practice the English language every day.” Participant 6 responded, “Having experiences with speakers of English, I am sure would make me pay more attention and make efforts to learn and speak English in a better manner.”

In conclusion, all participants suggested that teachers and school administrators should support ESL students by creating a positive learning environment. Most of the participants suggested the extended time from regular schedule directed to English class; after school hours, Saturdays or can be done 3 times a week, for 2 hours daily. The majority of the participants suggested after-school ESL programs for these students who have never taken English classes in their home countries. Almost all participants suggested for technology to be integrated into the English curriculum.

Dominican immigrant students reported that they need help to improve their English proficiency. Participant 1 stated, “My teacher shall use technology to explain new words.” Participant 2 stated, “I need to see the explanations of new words.” Participant 3 stated, “Why do we not use laptops? This teacher does not explain

anything.” Participant 4 stated, “Why is the teacher just teaching without checking to see if I understand.” Participant 5 stated, “Explanations in Spanish help me but this teacher refuses to translate English into Spanish.” Participant 6 stated, “I do not understand why the teacher is not using visual aids.” Participant 7 stated, “Why the teacher does not use other teaching activities on a computer or laptop.” Participant 8 stated, “I want to use the Internet to learn to speak English.” In conclusión, the findings include suggestions for intensified support for classes to help Dominican immigrant students improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school.

Thus, school administrators should also support teachers to help ESL students and should provide resources and professional development training to teachers in order to meet students' needs. School administrators should offer after-school programs as remediation to help students because ESL students are underprepared for literacy classes.

All Salient Data and Discrepant Cases

Discrepant cases include data that are considered to be outliers or hold inconsistencies with the initially identified themes or categories. Discrepant cases provide contrary evidence regarding the perspectives in relation to the central phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Discrepant cases were considered. The discrepant cases could help the school and district administrators with decision-making processes regarding after-school ESL programs. Discrepant cases will also assist policymakers with intensified support for ESL classes. The participants referred to the instructional strategies of the literacy teachers. For example, literacy teachers did not explain new vocabulary or the explanations did not help students understand the meaning of new vocabulary. Some literacy teachers did not

explain new vocabulary at all. Other teachers used the Socratic method to teach without engaging students. Some literacy teachers spoke English and Spanish and the explanations they provided to students in their native language, which is Spanish, helped them understand the lesson.

Some participants questioned why teachers did not use other teaching activities. Some participants also expressed frustration because literacy teachers did not explain the lesson and students did not understand what the teacher was teaching. Participants reported that teachers did not help them improve their speaking skills. Participants also reported that teachers did not help them to improve their English proficiency. Participants questioned why teachers were not using visual aids or computers to teach English. For example, participants 1-7 stated, "Teacher did not explain new words." Participants 2-7 stated that "the teacher is just teaching." Participant 6 stated, "I do not understand what the teacher is teaching." Participant 7 stated, "Why the teacher does not use other teaching activities." Participant 5 stated, "Explanations in Spanish help me but this teacher refuses to translate English into Spanish."

Dominican immigrant students, who have recently arrived in Puerto Rico, need to be taught in a flexible teaching environment where teachers use effective ESL strategies for these students to improve their English language proficiency. Teaching strategies could include student-centered instruction in ESL classes for high school students who have not taken English classes before. These high school students need to be motivated to be successful in their ESL classes. Student motivation and engagement in the classroom and technology integration into the curriculum help Dominican immigrant students learn

English. These findings could be used by district administrators to develop an after-school program that will provide Dominican immigrant students with opportunities to learn English and graduate from high school. The after-school program should include technology and interactive learning.

Discussion of Findings

Positive motivators included integration of technology in the classroom because technology helps students learn English (Theme 1). The participants reported that when technology such as Tablets and iPods is integrated into the curriculum, students may get better jobs. The participants also reported that online databases help them learn new vocabulary and improve their pronunciation.

Demotivators included assessments (Theme 2). The participants reported that feedback from teachers needs to be specific regarding the learning of English. The participants also reported that teaching and learning materials have to be relevant to the curriculum and to include verbal and written practical assignments. Intensified support for ESL classes (Theme 3) can help these students learn English. The participants reported that a flexible teaching environment could help these students improve their English language proficiency. The participants also reported that student-centered instruction in ESL classes for high school students are beneficial to those who have not taken English classes before.

Literacy teachers need to focus on interventions (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014) because the classroom environment continues to diversify (Kosutic, 2017). Learning opportunities should be for all students including ESL students (USDOE, 2017).

Demotivating learners results in negative students' attitudes toward learning (Kikuchi, 2015). Teachers can reduce demotivation (Molavi & Biria, 2013) and increase classroom engagement (Conley & French, 2014). Teachers need to be aware of students' personality, which determines motivation (Kyllonen, Lipnevich, Burrus, & Roberts, 2014).

Teachers should understand the cultural and learning styles of students (McDougal, 2015) and modify instruction based on students' learning styles (Manolis et al., 2013). Teachers should use class activities to assist ESL students (Roger, 2014) with writing (Fisher & Frey, 2015). Language class activities help students (Donaldson, 2016). Teachers should use teaching methods to increase students' learning (Murphy & Torff, 2016) and to develop higher-level thinking (Hill, 2014). Teachers should help students develop literacy (Mertler, 2016) and essential skills (Murphy & Torff, 2016). Teachers who teach Spanish-speaking students should use cooperative learning (Rolon, 2013).

School administrators should also support teachers to help ESL students (Hamilton, 2015). School district administrators should provide resources and professional development training to teachers (Milner et al., 2013) in order to meet students' needs (Mertler, 2016). After-school programs give ESL students a chance to learn more (Baker, 2013). School administrators should offer after-school programs as remediation to help students (Mangan, 2017) because ESL students are underprepared for literacy classes (Hassel & Giordano, 2015). After-school programs are good interventions (Oh, Osgood, & Smith, 2014) for English language learners (Short & Boyson, 2012).

Gardner and Lambert (2009) affirmed the integration of ESL students helps them learn a new language. Educational technologies affect ESL students' learning (Davidson & Candy, 2016; Hjalmarsson, 2015).

Direction of the Project

A white paper was developed to address the recommendation of the ESL after school program in addition to providing professional development for ESL teachers. The study will result in social change by strengthening ESL students' English and literacy support, thereby allowing ESL students to succeed academically, and graduate facilitating the opportunity to join the workforce or attend college. I will recommend to the Puerto Rico Department Education and to school districts to offer an after-school program that will be a supplemental program during the school year between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. A continual evaluation is important to provide evidence of the program's impact on ESL students' English proficiency. The direction of the project may be implemented by surrounding school districts serving Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico. The teaching content could include conversational activities focusing on the acquisition of vocabulary, literacy materials for adolescents, technology integration, socio-cultural interventions, motivational activities, and counseling.

Summary

Within Section 2, I presented the methodology used for this project study. The research site was a high school in the San Juan area of Puerto Rico. A qualitative case study was conducted to understand motivating and demotivating factors for the acquisition of English as experienced by Dominican students. I identified potential

participants who met the selection criteria that included recently arrived students from the Dominican Republic who are taking ESL classes at the high school level.

I purposefully selected the participants. I provided the director at the research site with copies of my confidentiality agreement and consent letter. I scheduled a meeting at the high school with potential participants, which took place after-school hours. Eight participants consented to participate in the study. The semi-structured interviews included open-ended questions. Each interview was between 35 and 50 minutes. I kept field notes during the two weeks I conducted the interviews.

I analyzed the data using ATLAS.ti A line-by-line analysis was conducted to ensure validity. Next, I conducted member checking. Thus, within Section 2, I discussed sample procedures, data collection, and data analysis methods. Within Section 3 of this study, a project based on the study findings is presented.

Section 3: The Project

Every year, Dominican high school students arrive in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English. Participants in this study were Dominican high school ESL students. After the data analysis, the themes that emerged from the findings regarding motivators and demotivators were: (a) literacy teachers should use motivators within instructional strategies, (b) literacy teachers should be aware of demotivators, and (c) intensified support for ESL classes can help Dominican immigrant ESL students to improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school in Puerto Rico.

Based on the findings of this study, I developed a white paper training for ESL teachers to teach at the after-school program. The PD, which was developed to help ESL teachers, school administrators, school district leaders, and career leaders will provide an opportunity critical support of ESL teachers in providing quality instruction for ESL students. School administrators can participate in the professional development process and prepare ESL teachers to teach at the after-school program.

I have prepared a white paper, which is a supplemental intensified support for ESL teachers to teach at an after-school program to help Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico improve their proficiency in ESL (Appendix A). The intensified support for ESL teachers to offer students opportunities to improve their proficiency in English. The supplemental intensified support for ESL classes will give students a chance to apply language skills to increase their proficiency in English.

I created the white paper as a supplemental intensified support for ESL classes to

provide students with academic, cultural, and societal support (Appendix A). The focus of the supplemental intensified support for ESL classes is on cultural, linguistic, and literacy needs of these students. I have included classroom activities to capture students' interests. Classroom spoken English language activities will be delivered once a week. Other activities will include the Dominican Day parade, Dominican Republic Independence Day, and typical cuisine demonstrations. All teaching activities will be conducted in the English language. The supplemental intensified support for ESL classes that I have created will involve participants, relatives, teachers, and school community members.

Description and Goals of the Project

Based on the emergent themes that literacy teachers should use motivators within instructional strategies and intensified support for ESL classes to help Dominican immigrant ESL students to improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school in Puerto Rico, I created the white paper as a supplemental to be offered during a school year between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm Monday to Friday (Appendix A). The goal of the white paper is an intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program is to help Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico to improve their proficiency in English. The after-school program will help these students with conversational activities that focus on the acquisition of vocabulary and with literacy materials for adolescents with technology integration. ESL teachers will use a variety of learning strategies to create positive learning experiences for students during the after-school program. The goals of the after-school program are to: (a) serve the needs of the

ESL students as an intervention initiative to help them graduate from high school, (b) offer ESL students' academic support to develop academic skills, and (c) create a positive learning environment where teachers will use differentiated instruction and research-based assessment strategies.

Rationale for the Intensified Support for ESL Classes

The Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE, 2014) reported that 17% of the general students were proficient in ESL subjects, including Dominican immigrant students (PRDE, 2014). Dixon et al. (2012) stated that innovative forms of education for second language learners involves ESL teaching strategies because immigrants would shape many aspects of American society, providing practically all the growth in the United States labor force (Passel, 2011). Lazarin (2008) suggested expanded learning time as a school-wide strategy to meet the unique needs of ESL students. Literacy teachers should teach multicultural and multilingual literature for students to improve literacy skills (Bolderston et al., 2008). Supplemental educational and support services are needed to teach ESL students (Kim et al., 2011).

I created the white paper for Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico in order to help them increase their proficiency in English. The white paper is for an after-school program to assist Dominican immigrant students with the English language acquisition by using motivational factors at the high school level in Puerto Rico. As a future implication, the white paper could be offered by the Department of Education of Puerto Rico in other school districts.

Developing, implementing, and evaluating the intensified support for ESL classes could provide school and district administrators with resources for improving proficiency in English and promoting the white paper in the metropolitan area of San Juan. A program evaluation may assist senior administrators in making decisions regarding the support for this kind of extra intensified support for ESL classes program to other school districts. The number of ESL students graduating from high school may increase due to the effectiveness of new programs.

Review of Literature

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand Dominican immigrant ESL students' perceptions of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes in order to develop English proficiency at the target site. To explore Dominican immigrant ESL students' perceived motivators and demotivators regarding English acquisition and suggestions for improving the ESL students' instruction to address English acquisition, the literature review included several databases such as SAGE and ERIC. I used the following search terms to locate related peer-reviewed and other material: *theories for learning, Dominican immigrant ESL students, motivators and demotivators regarding English acquisition, and suggestions for improving the ESL students' instruction to address English acquisition, and qualitative research*. I selected peer-reviewed articles based on their generalizability and relevance to the current study.

Researchers have reported that earning a high school diploma is not a guarantee that students will be successful in college (ACT, 2017). High school students do not have the skills needed to be successful for college entrance (ACT, 2017) and struggle

academically (Karp & Bork, 2014). Researchers have also reported that students who participate in language interventions achieve higher rates of completion of high school. Intervention is effective at extending knowledge (Zucker et al., 2013).

Literacy teachers need to focus on literacy interventions that need to be sustained over time because without interventions language gains may not be sustainable (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014). Kosutic (2017) stated that literacy teachers should balance knowledge and culture as the classroom environment continues to diversify. Intensifying the ESL program by extending instructional time for ESL students after school would fulfill the target of sustained instruction over time

Dominican immigrant students attend ESL classes in Puerto Rico (USDOE, 2017). These Dominican immigrant students are both ESL students and economically disadvantaged. The goal of these students is to graduate from high school. Teachers who teach ESL students should focus on improving students' language proficiency (Sidhu, 2013). Teachers should also focus on making language learners feel comfortable by ensuring that students understand most of the conversation in the classroom (Stewart, 2010). ESL students in Puerto Rico demonstrate low proficiency in English (PRDOE, 2016). ESL students are placed into remedial literacy courses (Koelsch, 2011). ESL students need to understand the importance of English (Liu & Huang, 2011). Teachers should motivate students by providing positive feedback while learning English (Liu & Zhang, 2013). Motivation impacts the learning of ESL students (Falout, 2012).

According to Bembenuddy, Cleary, and Kitsantas (2013), the students' inability to self-control their learning behaviors is connected to academic learning difficulties and

low motivation. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) stated that demotivation reduces motivation. Jain and Sidhu (2013) identified anxiety, which is a demotivator, as a significant issue influencing language learning. Fallout (2012) identified demotivators in second language learners such as grammar-translation. Students are frustrated when they do not understand what is beyond their level. Internal and external factors impact demotivation (Alavinia et al., 2012). Rastegar, Akbarzadeh, and Heidari (2012) stated that ineffective teaching methods, class atmosphere, negative test results, lack of self-confidence, and experiences of failure are external and internal factors that impact demotivation in ESL classes. Kikuchi (2015) stated that demotivated learners have negative attitudes toward learning.

Teachers can help ESL students with thinking activities about their language learning experiences. Nahavandi (2013) noted that learning activities help students when teachers facilitate students' learning. Demotivation can be reduced (Molavi & Biria, 2013). Motivation is required when learning another language. Gholami (2012) stated that teachers should facilitate students' acquisition of the language through social interaction.

After-school programs provide students with content in areas like music, dance, artwork, field trips, and learning opportunities. There are different types of after-school programs developed to meet students' academic goals, such as mentoring and extending the school day (USDOE, 2017). After-school programs give ESL students a chance to learn more to increase their proficiency in English. These programs provide students with much-needed support, not just academically, but also culturally and socially. According

to Baker (2013), after-school programs have a positive impact on ESL students. Short and Boyson (2012) reported that these programs help students develop literacy skills.

High school literacy students need to have motivation and classroom engagement (Conley & French, 2014). Students' personalities determines motivation (Kyllonen, Lipnevich, Burrus, & Roberts, 2014). Students need to cope with difficulties in learning in order for them not to struggle academically (Karp & Bork, 2014). Students' personalities, motivation, and classroom engagement impact students' content knowledge (Karp & Bork, 2014).

Scholars have published suggestions for remedial courses. School administrators should offer remediation classes to help students (Mangan, 2017). For example, students who took remedial courses stated that the content was not taught to them in those classes (Bachman, 2013). Students expressed frustrations of being underprepared for literacy classes (Hassel & Giordano, 2015). Students learn more when teachers use learning styles (Howard, 2013). Teachers should understand the cultural and learning styles of students (McDougal, 2015) and should modify instruction to fit students' learning styles (Manolios et al., 2013).

Teachers should use critical literacy to address students who are behind their peers in literacy (Rogers, 2014). Teachers develop class activities to assist students to understand complex texts (Roger, 2014). Teachers should develop class activities such as writing and oral presentations for students to have meaningful experiences (Fisher & Frey, 2015). School administrators should encourage teachers to use critical literacy to better prepare high school students (Harper & Davis, 2012). School administrators should

also encourage teachers to implement alternative literacy activities (Hamilton, 2015). Researchers have reported that language classes activities should be focused on coursework toward remedial core academic areas (Donaldson, 2016).

Scholars have conducted research on what makes teachers effective. For example, effective teachers do more than present content and use teaching methods to increase students' performance (Murphy & Torff, 2016). Effective teachers encourage higher-level thinking (Hill, 2014).

Scholars have conducted research on how school and district administrators can help students. For example, school and district administrators should provide resources and professional development training to teachers to help them increase their competencies in teaching (Milner et al., 2013). School and district administrators should also help teachers adjust instructional goals to meet the students' needs by assessing student's progress during instruction (Mertler, 2016).

Teachers should help students develop literacy skills by creating an active learning and diverse classroom (Mertler, 2016). Students need to develop essential skills for learning, work, and citizenship in the 21st century (Murphy & Torff, 2016). For example, students need to be able to analyze information (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012). Students need to develop skills for the 21st century for success in college, career, and life (Magner, Soulé, & Wesolowski, 2011). Teachers should prepare all students for college and careers (PRDOE, 2017). Teachers need to focus on students' ability to access and analyze 21st century information (Paige, Smith, & Sizemore, 2015). Teachers can help

students develop 21st century skills by making instructional decisions that can change students' performance (Airmail, 2016).

According to Rolon (2013), teachers who teach Spanish-speaking students should use cooperative learning groups to help students learn English. Teachers should incorporate visuals and assess knowledge by asking questions. Teachers should be aware of the importance of caring about these students (Comer, 2013). According to The Equity Center (2014), teachers should eliminate the use of language that appears to stereotype students.

Researchers have focused on second language acquisition. According to Nguyen and Godwyll (2010), teaching strategies should include motivation to reduce students' anxiety. Oh, Osgood, and Smith (2014) stated that after-school programs are good interventions. Short and Boyson (2012) focused on the newly arrived immigrant students at the middle and high school levels and discovered middle and high school newcomer students demonstrate a diversity of uniqueness. After-school programs offer reading interventions for English language learners (Short & Boyson, 2012).

The cross-cultural interaction needs to be recognized, in terms of immigrants because there are considerable tasks in terms of emotional and social support. A cross-cultural interaction could be reinforced with strategies that contain professional support, which will be included in this study with suggestions to educate the whole family (Reyes & Kleyn, 2010). Durlak, Mahoney, Bohnert, and Parente (2010) reported that lessons taught in a positive way with high-quality expectations could help students understand the curriculum test scores. Jones and Deutsch (2013) examined youths' experiences in

after-school program and reported that school activities could help students pass tests. Tabar and Rezaei (2015) affirmed that motivation is a stimulus to learn a second language; however, Aydin (2012) stated that ESL learners need intrinsic motivation. Gardner (1985) reported that integrative motivation and instrumental orientation are related to gaining proficiency in English. Son and Rueda (2015) reported that motivation is a vital factor in the learning of all students. Gardner and Lambert (2009) affirmed the integration of ESL students helps them learn a new language because a student who learns English for employment has an instrumental orientation to ESL. According to Riley (2012), when ESL students struggle with learning, they are not participating in classroom activities and teachers may address the needs of these students.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have an effect on teaching practices in the ESL classroom (Hjalmarsson, 2015). Hockley and Thomas (2014) suggested that teachers could use technology such as video chats and video calls in the classroom. Davidson & Candy (2016) affirmed teachers may integrate technology into their teaching strategies.

According to Hirvonen (2010), demotivators include teaching strategies, course material, course content, and learning environment to learn a new language. Rashidi and Moghadam, (2014) reported that demotivators include teaching practices. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) posited teachers could interact with students on an individual level to meet the individual needs of students.

Project Description

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

Potential and existing recourses will be identified from the school administrator. Funding will be needed from federal funding for Title I, Title II, and Title III programs. I will submit a copy of the designed after-school hours ESL program for funding. The creation of alliances with the local universities may facilitate funding and support the project. Details of the after-school program are outlined in Table 1. Allocations of funds for ESL materials including supplemental teaching materials are needed to support ESL students and senior district administrators will allocate funds and resources.

Funding is needed for the after-school intensified support for ESL classes program, which might be a barrier for the implementation of the proposed project. Another barrier could be the time to implement the ESL program. Other barriers could include the recruitment of highly qualified literacy teachers to teach between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm Monday to Friday. Technical barriers might consist of school management, technology issues, lack of materials, and communication issues. A potential solution is to arrange for funding from the federal government via a grant. A potential technical barrier would be the inability to connect to technology. A potential solution is to use a cross-compatible program such as Google.

Implementation

For this project, I used literacy materials for adolescents to include reading interventions for ESL students and ESL strategies to help students graduate from high school. The teaching content includes motivational strategies to help students with

English language acquisition. Teachers who will participate in the after-school program will be supported to help students improve their proficiency in English. ESL students who will attend the after-school program will be asked to provide feedback on this project by responding to program evaluation questions to help me evaluate the objectives and outcomes of the project at the end of each academic term. A program evaluation will help district administrators make decisions on the operation of the project. For the program evaluation, I will include English grades from before and after the program's implementation.

Timetable of the After-school ESL Program

The after-school program has been implemented at the research site and the first classes will start in September 2018. Highly qualified ESL teachers will be recruited for the after-school project and will be offered a professional development in the summer of 2018. Research-based teaching resources will be made available to these teachers and students through an online format that will be hosted by Little Mountain Learning Academy. The after-school program will be offered each academic year, which is between August and May. The program is designed to assure students' academic success. The uniqueness of this program is that each class will have literacy-related activities based on participants' academic needs. Students in the program will work independently and in small groups in which teachers will facilitate the learning process.

The classroom activities will be discovery-based in order to help students increase their proficiency in English. The weekly schedule is listed in Table 1:

Table 1

Weekly Schedule

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 3:00 | Sign in | Sign in | Sign in | Sign in | Sign in |
| 3:10 | /snacks | /snacks | /snacks | /snacks | /snacks |
| 3:10 | Cultural | Real-life | One-on-one | Teamwork | Technology |
| 4:10 | immersion | experiences | social | Presentations | Integration |
| | activities | | conversations | | |
| 4:10 | Real-life | One-on-one | Real-life | One-on-one | Technology |
| 5:00 | experiences | social | experiences | social | integration |
| | | conversations | | conversation | activities |
| 4:30 | One-on-one | Technology | Teamwork | Real | Recreational |
| 5:00 | social | Integration | Presentations | experiences | activities |
| | conversations | | | | |

Roles and Responsibilities of Students and Others

As a researcher and an educator, I have designed and implemented the ESL curriculum for an after-school program (Appendix A). I will explain the curriculum to district administrators at the research site. I will present the professional development sessions for program to administrators and teachers in the summer of 2018. I will communicate with school district administrators at the other districts to offer the intensified support for ESL classes. For example, the following is a description of intensified support for ESL classes as classroom activities.

Cultural immersion activities: The opportunity for each participant to understand the teaching content and to integrate into the new culture. The activities will include role playing and the celebration of local and Dominican festivities. ESL teachers will facilitate classroom activities by using videos, music, short stories, and guest speakers to

enhance students' ESL proficiency.

One-on-one social conversations: Students will develop speaking skills. Topics will be assigned based on teaching themes.

Real-life experiences: English native guest speakers will be invited to share learning experiences and to actively participate in each teaching activity. Classroom activities with the guests will promote the students' participation in dialogue with peers and the guest speakers.

Recreational activities: Drama, musicals, and conferences will be part of this project.

Teamwork Presentations: Teachers will assign teamwork activities for students to work in groups for language acquisition.

Technology integration: Technological tools such as tablets, desktop computers, cell phones, television sets, video cameras, voice recorders, and so forth will be used for the creation of integrated lessons.

Project Evaluation Plan

After I present the intensified support for ESL classes content to administrators and teachers, I will conduct face-to-face interviews with students, literacy teachers, and parents to share their perceptions of the program in order for me to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses to revise its content. Face-to-face interviews will be conducted every academic term at the sites offering the after-school program. Feedback from these stakeholders is necessary for me evaluate the after-school program in terms of what works and what does not. Evaluations will include the effectiveness and impact of the

after-school program on students' proficiency in English. Evaluations will be both formative and summative.

Project Implications

Language awareness should be incorporated in all areas and levels of the curriculum because language is intrinsic to the learning carried out in all academic subjects (Halle et al., 2012). Leaving explicit grammar for high school and allowing younger students to develop their own sense of language functions and forms would help reduce fear and increase motivation (Bolderston et al., 2008). The systematic preparation in phonemic consciousness can develop literacy outcomes for ESL students learning to read English (Meunier & Granger, 2008). Low-performance readers, including bilingual students who are not native English speakers, can gain from systematic instruction that focuses on phonological awareness, which is connected to literacy (Halle et al., 2012).

The findings of this doctoral study will have an impact on local social change for Dominican immigrant students to graduate from high school. The findings of this study should be used by policymakers, ESL literacy teachers, and school and district administrators in Puerto Rico to create after-school programs to help Dominican immigrant students graduate from high school. Dominican immigrant students who will attend an after-school program will become more proficient in English.

The implementation of an after-school program to help Dominican immigrant students graduate from high school could be used as a quality literacy intervention to help these students pass literacy state tests. The improvement of literacy of Dominican

immigrant students at the high school will help the local communities in Puerto Rico because these students could enroll in college programs or join the workforce.

The findings of this study can be helpful to district administrators in Puerto Rico for decision-making processes to help Dominican immigrant students graduate from high school. The finding of this study should encourage high school administrators to offer professional development opportunities for literacy teachers to teach in after-school programs. The focus of professional development for literacy teachers would be on differentiated instruction to help Dominican immigrant high students improve reading vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension of the content within their grade levels.

Summary

Dominican high school students arrive in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English each year. The ESL students attend English classes to improve their language skills. A supplemental after-school program was developed to aid Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico improve their proficiency in English. The after-school program is a supplemental program during a school year between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The program will have an impact on Dominican immigrant ESL students because the white paper includes conversational activities with the focus on the acquisition of vocabulary, literacy materials for adolescents, technology integration, socio-cultural interventions and motivational activities.

Literacy materials for adolescents include reading interventions for ESL students and ESL strategies to help students graduate from high school. The teaching content includes motivational strategies to help students with English language acquisition.

Teachers who will be participating in the after-school program will be supported to follow up with ESL students to help them improve their proficiency in English. At the end of each academic term, ESL students will be asked to provide feedback.

A program evaluation will help district administrators make decisions on the operation of the after-school program for Dominican immigrant ESL students. The after-school program evaluation will include English grades from before and after the program's implementation. Potential and existing recourses will be identified from the school district. Funding will be needed from federal funding for Title I, Title II, and Title III programs. When ESL students graduate from high school, they seek higher education or employment in the community.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The focus of this study was Dominican immigrant students attending ESL classes at the high school level for the first time in Puerto Rico. As a researcher and an educator, I have been concerned with why these ESL students have not improved their proficiency in English. Based on my findings, I am recommending to senior district administrators that the English language acquisition programs be offered to help these students develop academic and social skills to compete in the 21st century by attending after-school programs to be more proficient in English.

Project Strengths

The intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program will help ESL students graduate from high school. School and district administrators will use the findings of this study to help immigrant students attending public high schools to pass standardized tests and graduate from high school. The intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program will help these students develop academic and social skills. Professional development summer sessions for the after-school program will support literacy teachers who will be teaching at an after-school program to help their students improve their proficiency in English in Puerto Rico by using high-quality teaching materials. The graduates from the after-school program could enroll in college programs or join the workforce.

Project Limitations

The focus of the after-school program is on helping ESL Dominican immigrant students improve their proficiency in English. The intensified support for ESL classes for

an after-school program is limited to one public high school within a school district where ESL Dominican immigrant students participated in the study. The intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program is also limited to a small sample of public high school ESL students in San Juan metropolitan area who were from low socioeconomic status. The success of the program will depend, in part, on the use of differentiated instructional strategies by the literacy teachers who could encourage ESL students' interest in the after-school program. The success of the program will also depend on the needs of the local communities serving a similar sample. The research problem may be addressed at other high schools in the same metropolitan area by interviewing district administrators regarding ESL Dominican immigrant students. The responses from district administrators could help promote the ESL after-school project.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

An alternative approach would be for teachers who teach ESL Dominican high school students to have monthly meetings for teachers and administrators to discuss experiences and content delivery to help these students increase their proficiency in English. This approach would allow opportunities for cross-district collaboration so that teachers can share what is working and what is not working. Another alternative would be for teachers to mentor each other to share teaching strategies, observe one another, and provide feedback to each other as peers. Another alternative way is for the policymakers to allocate a budget to hire the effective and experienced ESL mentors. ESL teachers should be provided with a mentor who would spend certain required hours to help the teachers become successful ESL teachers.

Scholarship

The literature review on ESL Dominican immigrant students is limited. The replication of this project study could include a larger sample and a mixed-methods research design to identify the factors why these students have challenges with ESL classes. Possible factors that could have an impact on the ESL program could include the lack of funding. Instructional strategies should be examined to determine the effects of ESL after-school program.

The findings from this study could provide an insight into the acquisition of English by ESL students. District and school administrators may examine the needs of ESL Dominican immigrant students and the necessary resources teachers may require for the instruction of the program. The school administrators could support the after-school program to help the local communities serve the needs of ESL Dominican immigrant students. School administrators may find additional benefits of the students' achievement in additional skills. Furthermore, administrators could support teachers to improve their teaching practice.

I have learned as a novice researcher how to conduct research. I developed data collection and analysis skills by communicating with the participants in my project study. I have a passion for ESL students' learning. I realized the limitations in research and the dynamics of policymakers. I also realized that ESL classes are having a positive impact on Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico. ESL programs need improvement, academic standards, teaching strategies, and effective decision-making processes.

This study was more important than originally thought regarding the findings

having an impact on the positive social change in Puerto Rico by helping Dominican immigrant students become lifelong learners. Future studies may be conducted based on the findings of my study. After conducting this project study, my passion regarding this topic has increased and I prepared a white paper to present to local school districts. I will conduct more research. I will publish my findings in research journals.

Project Development and Evaluation

The development of the intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program has given me the opportunity to learn about a specific process to conduct scholarly research. I conducted the project study with the focus on ethics, teaching practices, and factors that have an impact on ESL students. The development of the after-school program was a laborious task during which I considered research-based factors to help ESL students. The after-school program development was a process wherein I used existing models for how ESL programs are developed and evaluated; however, this after-school program is unique in San Juan Metropolitan area in Puerto Rico. The participants who attended high school had limited knowledge of written and spoken English.

The white paper for the after-school program will prepare ESL students, including Dominican immigrant students, to improve their proficiency in English through cognitive activities and practical applications.

This project study has been a rewarding academic experience for me. Community stakeholders such as politicians, policymakers, teachers, and school administrators could offer the after-school program at other school districts to help ESL students and ultimately the community.

Leadership and Change

Based on the themes about motivators and demotivators, I aim to use the findings of this project to make change to the local school district for ESL students to graduate from high school. Appendix A will help stakeholders school and district administrators, politicians, policymakers, ESL teachers, and researchers implement the findings for the betterment of the local community. The project could be applied to an after-school ESL program in communities outside the San Juan Metropolitan area because the intensified support for ESL classes is needed by students. As a researcher and an educator with a passion for helping ESL students, I have a clear vision of how to apply the after-school program to local educational settings in Puerto Rico. The overall vision to address the after-school program at the research site is to increase to increase the number of ESL high school graduates.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

I learned a lot as a novice researcher. I am the first-born male in my family and proud to be the first novice researcher. I learned that research is a rigorous process and an inspiration. I am truly a lifelong learner. I conducted this project with enthusiasm regarding ESL students as an ESL teacher. I have worked for over 20 years with Dominican immigrant students and learned to appreciate each learner. This project study a great experience for me as I learned how to conduct interviews, analyze data, and present my findings. I will apply my experience in my daily work and will be writing applications for grants to gain access to ESL resources to be used in classrooms to help ESL students.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

I applied knowledge of research design to conduct this qualitative case study. I interviewed eight ESL students and enjoyed interacting with each participant during the interviews and member checking. Furthermore, I valued organizing and analyzing the data and identifying the emergent themes. I have understood the needs of ESL students within my local community and understand the ESL project will have an impression on ESL students' success. ESL stakeholders must be aware of the influence of an ESL after-school program on student achievement. The research-based findings may help ESL stakeholders make decisions for the preparation of ESL students to graduate from high school. I am convinced that I will continue to improve my research skills and will prepare research studies for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals. I have discovered through this project study that I am evaluating my own self-efficacy and learning from my mistakes. I have learned that one can never stop improving, editing, looking for the best choice of words, and refining his or her writing.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

I am more competent as a researcher than I was when I began this project. I have developed the after-school program by using my own creativity and expertise as an ESL educator, school principal, and adult program director. I have helped ESL students at all academic levels. The after-school program will be presented to administrators at other school districts. The implementation of the after-school program with professional development opportunities for ESL teachers will impact student success. ESL teachers and school administrators will be encouraged to dialogue about ESL concerns on a

regular basis through the Principal Advisory Council at the high school.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

The themes were about motivators and demotivators and the participants made suggestions regarding English language acquisition at the high school level for ESL students. The ESL program has a potential impact on local social change because ESL students will be assisted to improve their proficiency in English and as a result graduate from high school. The potential impact on social change includes additional ESL high school graduates, which may affect the local community. School and district administrators, ESL teachers, and policymakers will be encouraged to work collaboratively to support the ESL project. The after-school program content could help policymakers to develop ESL policies and procedures to help ESL students meet academic standards.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The project (Appendix A) could help policymakers help ESL Dominican immigrant students graduate. The project content will prepare ESL students to pass literacy tests because the white paper is research-based enriched content in order to help these students improve their proficiency in English.

I conducted a qualitative case study to understand ESL students' perceptions of ESL courses. I interviewed a small sample (eight ESL high school students). Should scholars replicate my study, a larger sample of ESL students from more than one high school should be used. A quantitative study such as a *t*-test, ANOVA, or MANOVA could be piloted to observe the effect of the after-school program on student achievement

as measured by standardized test scores in English. A mixed-methods research design could also be conducted to examine the effect of the ESL after-school program on standardized test scores in English and to interview school administrators, ESL teachers, and parents. Recommendations for future research could include the comparison of ESL programs offered by private urban or rural schools, alternative schools.

Conclusion

School and district administrators will benefit from the findings of this project study to help ESL students to pass standardized tests. The project will help students improve their proficiency in English. The project has a potential impact on local social change because ESL students will improve their proficiency in English and graduate from high school. I presented to local school districts the after-school program with the focus on Dominican immigrant ESL students. I have developed the project by using my creativity and expertise as an ESL educator, school principal, and adult program director.

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Appendix A: The Project

A White Paper for Professional Development for ESL Teachers in Puerto Rico

by

Luis Amador

July 2018

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Introduction

Dominican students immigrate to Puerto Rico and attend English as a second language (ESL) classes because English proficiency is a requirement to graduate from high school. The purpose of this qualitative project study was to understand the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes. I explored Dominican immigrant ESL students' perceived motivators and demotivators regarding English acquisition and suggestions for improving the ESL students' instruction to address English acquisition by using Krashen's theory. I collected data using semistructured one-on-one interviews from 8 ESL students who met the criteria of being a Dominican ESL student, enrolled in ESL classes, and being 18 years old or older. Data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti 7. The themes were that literacy teachers should use motivators and specific instructional strategies and should be aware of demotivators and additional instructional time for students to improve English proficiency was recommended to graduate from high school.

Project Study Problem

Due to federal funding, the research problem is that Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) has not provided ESL teachers with instructional resources to help Dominican immigrant high school students improve their English proficiency. At the research site, the majority of Dominican immigrant students did not graduate from high school because they did not pass state exams in English literacy (PRDE, 2015). Literacy teachers in Puerto Rico who have taught Dominican immigrant students, do not have the

teaching resources, or skills to focus on academics because English is the second language of these students (PRDE, 2015). The focus of this study was on motivators and demotivators of Dominican immigrant high school students who have arrived in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English and have difficulties graduating from high school.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this qualitative case study were:

RQ1. What are the perceptions and experiences of Dominican Immigrant ESL students regarding the motivators and demotivators of the ESL English proficiency classes?

RQ2. What resources or support do Dominican Immigrant students perceive would support their English Language acquisition in the ESL classes?

Literature Review

High school students do not have the skills needed to be successful (ACT, 2013) and struggle academically (Karp & Bork, 2014). High school grade point averages are a strong reflection of students' college or university readiness after high school (Jimenez, Sargrad, Morales, & Thompson, 2016). Students' academic performance depends on student characteristics (McNeish, Radunzel, Sanchez, 2015) and students' attributes (Arnold, Lu, & Armstrong, 2012). These students need to improve their literacy skills from attendance in language programs (Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013). Interventions related to the acquisition of language skills extend knowledge (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014; Kosutic, 2017); Zucker, Solari, Landry, & Swank, 2013).

High school teachers need to better prepare students for writing (Bachman, 2013; Hassel & Giordano, 2015). Teachers need to understand the importance of learning styles (Glonek, 2013) because students learn more when their personal experiences align toward their learning styles (Howard, 2013; McDougal, 2015). Negative attitudes of students toward English impact their learning (Cheng, 2012, Kikuchi, 2015).

Critical literacy addresses students who are lagging behind their peers in literacy (Rogers, 2014). Language class activities should be focused on coursework toward remedial core academic areas (Donaldson, 2016). Teachers should develop class activities such as writing and oral presentations for students to have meaningful experiences (Fisher & Frey, 2015). Teachers should encourage higher-level thinking (Murphy & Torff, 2016). School administrators should encourage teachers to use critical literacy to better prepare high school students (Hamilton, 2015; Harper & Davis, 2012).

After-school programs enhance learning by providing learning opportunities to increase ESL students' collaboration and interests (Baker, 2013). After-school programs increase students' engagement in learning and improve students' self-efficacy (Kim, 2007). High school literacy students need to have motivation (Conley & French, 2014) and to cope with difficult situations (Karp & Bork, 2014).

School administrators should offer remediation classes to help students (Mangan, 2017). School and district administrators should also provide resources and professional development training to teachers (Mertler, 2016). Students need to develop essential skills for learning, work, and citizenship in the 21st century (Murphy & Torff, 2016) and be prepared for college and careers (Paige, Smith, & Sizemore, 2015). School

administrators should encourage teachers to use critical literacy to better prepare high school students (Hamilton, 2015) and language classe activities focused on coursework toward remedial core academic areas (Donaldson, 2016). Son and Rueda (2015) reported that motivation is a vital factor in the learning of all students. Hockley and Thomas (2014) reported that technology such as video chats and video calls are helpful in the classroom. Davidson and Candy (2016) reported that teachers may integrate technology into their teaching strategies.

Professional development (PD) is offered to individuals to enhance their knowledge and skills (Koellner & Jacobs, 2015). PD enhances educational practices (Nabhania, O'Day Nicolas, & Bahous, 2014). PD activities are designed to apply new knowledge (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015).

For the after-school program, ESL teachers will attend PD to learn about learning communities (Patton, Parker, & Tannehill, 2015). ESL teachers through PD will engage with other teachers to learn from each other (Zepeda, Parylo, & Bengtson, 2014). ESL teachers learn how to foster learning where teachers will collaborate with other teachers on lesson planning (Kennedy, 2016).

School administrators will help ESL teachers via PD sessions to present best teaching practices (Mazzotti, Rowe, Simonsen, Boaz, & VanAvery, 2018). School administrators would identify PD needs (Mandinach & Gummer, 2016). Via PD, ESL teachers will improve their content knowledge (Barrett, Cowen, Toma, & Troske, 2015). School administrators should mentor ESL teachers because mentoring is an essential component of teaching (Welton, Mansfield, Lee, & Young, 2015). Mentoring could be

used by mentors to guide ESL teachers in improving teaching strategies (Augustine-Shaw & Hachiya, 2017). An effective mentoring provides teachers with opportunities for open communication with veteran teachers and mentoring relationship is built on trust and openness and is sustained as long as it is needed (Opengart & Bierema, 2015). Mentors have the responsibility to foster a cooperative, trusting, and supportive relationships with the mentees (Hobbs & Stovall, 2015).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the theory of second language acquisition (Krashen, 1981). According to Krashen (1981), ESL is the process of language learning. ESL students may improve their proficiency in English by using cognitive activities, intense projects, and practical applications (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Literacy teachers should use modeling, coaching, and scaffolding for students to improve their knowledge. ESL students should become active participants in their learning to develop lifelong literacy skills. ESL students may improve their proficiency in literacy in a student-centered teaching environment, which is based on the Krashen conceptual model. The high school ESL target site classes that were the focus of the research project should be using the strategies that Krashen describes that promote successful acquisition of English. Literacy teachers should be aware that ESL is a process of language learning and can help ESL students to improve their proficiency in English by using classroom activities that are cognitive. Literacy teachers can use intense projects where students can work on practical applications. Literacy teachers can also use

Krashen's suggestions not only to model instruction but also to coach students in order to improve their knowledge.

Research Design and Approach

The qualitative approach was appropriate for this study to obtain and analyze perceptions of Dominican immigrant students in regard to the ESL classes and services focused on developing English proficiency to graduate from high school. Using a qualitative case study approach, I was able to gather the perceptions and experiences of Dominican immigrant ESL students regarding the motivators and demotivators of the ESL classes to develop English proficiency in order to graduate from high school. I examined a bounded system (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010), which consisted of Dominican immigrant ESL students who were taking classes at the local target high school in Puerto Rico. For the purpose of this project study, a source of my case study evidence was interviews with the participants (Yin, 2014). I selected interviews to give me full access to the details of the perceptions of Dominican immigrant ESL students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

Participants

The setting for this project study was one public high school located in Puerto Rico. The target high school has large enrollment of immigrant students arriving from the Dominican Republic. At the target site, the dropout rate for the Dominican immigrant students was between 7% and 8% annually and the graduation rate was 30% and one school director and 27 teachers of which 3 are ESL teachers (senior district administrator,

personal communication, January 11, 2015). The total enrollment for the academic year 2014-2015 was 157 students in Grade 10, 109 students in Grade 11, and 93 students in Grade 12 of which only 30% graduated. The high school population for this project study was 371 students of which 221 were females and 150 were males. Of the 371 students, 38 students were Hispanic not Puerto Rican, which refers to Dominicans students who received free-or-reduced meals and were identified as special education students.

The selection criteria included Dominican ESL students who were (a) from the Dominican Republic, (b) taking ESL classes, and (c) were 18 years old or older. The director at the high school identified participants from the 38 Dominicans students who met the selection criteria. I obtained a list of participants meeting the eligibility criteria from the director of the high school. From the 38 Dominicans students, eight students returned signed consent forms to the director, therefore the total participant sample for the project study was 8 ESL students who met the selection criteria and agreed to participate in the study. The 8 participants were 4 males and 4 females who were 19 years old. I used purposeful sampling and selected participants who provided me with rich information about the topic (McMillan, 2004).

A letter of cooperation was hand-delivered to the school administrator requesting approval to conduct the study. The letter of cooperation contained information regarding the purpose of the study, data collection, and an overview of the project study. Also, a copy of my letter of invitation, confidentiality agreement, and notice of consent were hand-delivered to the administrator responsible for research. The permissions from the school administrator was obtained to have access to the setting and the participants. This

administrator used the selection criteria I provided for participants and identified 38 Dominican immigrant students in Grades 10-12 who met the criteria as participants for the study. After the approval of permission from the school administrator, a formal letter was also personally delivered to each research participant. The formal letter included the purpose of the study, time for each interview, and a statement that the participation was voluntary. I contacted the 38 potential participants by telephone to schedule a meeting at the high school after-school hours at the library of the target site in a conference room. During the meeting I introduced the purpose of the study, the data collection plan, and the importance of the research. I provided each participant with a copy of the consent form containing information about my background as an educator, the objectives and purpose of the study, and explained the interview process. I asked each participant to deliver the signed consent form to the office of the administrator if they were interested in participating in the study. I also obtained IRB approval from Walden University (01-15-15-0183647). All notes and recordings were kept and locked with only the researcher having access to the data.

As the primary instrument for gathering data, my goal was to establish a trustworthy relationship with the participants in the study (Merriam, 2009). I explained the use of a protocol and how it would be used to structure our interview in addition to the process of probing during the interview to glean more information regarding specific responses. I reviewed the notice of consent again with each participant and provided them a copy for their files. The informed consent included the purpose and nature of the study, why they were asked to participate, and how the data analysis results would be shared

with all participants. I reminded the participant prior to the interview that they could withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty or consequence for not participating. I reminded them that I would be taking notes during the interview and I strived to maintain eye contact and monitored my nonverbal body language throughout the interview.

Researcher biases concerning the study were controlled by following the interview protocols (Merriam, 2012). I explained to each participant that my role as a researcher was that of a listener and the primary instrument for gathering data. During the interviews, I was attentive to the participants to establish rapport and to assure participants that the information shared was valuable to the study. I was aware of my personal experiences, biases, and assumptions and addressed them professionally not to impede the data collection process (Merriam, 2009).

During the interviews, I worked with the participants to develop a researcher-participant relationship. In order to establish a working relationship with the participants, I submitted my proposal to the school administrator responsible for research. I explained the nature of the study and how data were collected. I obtained permission to visit the research site in order to meet with the participants. After I obtained permission, I set up an appointment with each participant who wished to participate in the study. During each meeting with each participant, I explained the project study and answered all the questions they had about the study. The participants were given the agreement form. I finalized the interview schedule with each participant and held the interview on their convenient time. I conveyed respect to every participant and thanked them for their time

commitment and participation in the study. I wanted to collect rich data from the participant sample which included authentic responses from the participants (Merriam, 2009).

The participants signed a consent letter. The documents regarding this study were written in Spanish, which is the primary language of the Dominican participants. The interviews were conducted in the participants' native language. A pseudonym was assigned to each participant in order to protect the participants' identities prior to, during, and after data collection when the findings of the project study were reported. I used letter "P" for participant followed by a corresponding number for each interviewee to code the data to the transcription. For example, the first participant was P1 without revealing their name. I was the only person who knew the identities of each participant. The identity of the participants was not used in the findings or revealed at any time to district administrators.

The participants were informed that the collected data were protected and were only used for the research study. I was the only person who had access to the data. The identities of individual participants were not included in the report. Personal information outside of the research project were not disclosed. Codes were used instead of names to conceal the participants' identity.

Data Collection

The data collection process for this study consisted of semistructured one-on-one interviews, using the open-ended interview protocol, and the research journal where I kept notes during the interviews. The semistructured one-on-one interviews, researcher

journal, and member checking added to the descriptive nature of this qualitative case study analysis (Merriam, 2009). Interviewing the participants provided a significant aspect of data to understand the motivators and demotivators of Dominican immigrant ESL students to develop English proficiency in order to graduate from high school. The interview protocol was used to inform participants of the initial questions that were asked during the semistructured interviews (Lodico et al., 2010). The interview questions were values and opinion based or experience and behavior questions (Merriam, 2009). I informed the participants that their names will be kept confidential in order to protect their anonymity and elicit open, meaningful, and honest responses. I informed the participants that they could withdraw from the interview or refuse to answer questions that made them uncomfortable at any time without repercussions.

I met with the potential participants between April 1, 2015 and April 16, 2015. I collected the signed consent forms between April 17, 2015 and April 20, 2015 and made appointments with the participants for the interviews that took place at the school library in a private room to explain my study and the procedure for the interviews. I conducted the semistructured one-on-one interviews between May 1, 2015 and May 16, 2015. The interviews were transcribed between May 17, 2015 and May 25, 2015. The interview transcripts were in Spanish and I translated them into English between May 26, 2015 and May 31, 2015.

For this project study, 8 participants were sufficient to represent a rich description of their perceptions students of motivators and demotivators in ESL classes to develop English proficiency at the target site. Also, my interviews were sufficient to collect

qualitative data. With the collected data, I developed a rich description of the participants' input and recommendations for the after-school program. After transcribing and organizing my data, I conducted a preliminary exploratory analysis to acquire a general sense of the data, collect ideas, consider the organization of the data, and identified that data collected were sufficient.

Data Analysis

I organized the interview transcripts in order to answer the research questions. I organized the interview transcripts using Atlas.ti 7 and conducted a line-by-line thematic analysis. Initial themes and categories that emerged. I coded the interview data into themes under category within each research question. I included any personal reflections and field notes written during each interview. I invited via email each participant to review the findings for accuracy and to validate my interpretations. The participants reviewed the findings for accuracy and validated my interpretation. I color-coded each interview transcript. I used color blue to highlight motivators and color red to highlight demotivators. All highlighted comments were copied and pasted to two different spreadsheets, allowing me to group all information about each of the two research questions together. I reviewed each spreadsheet multiple times to determine themes and common threads through the data. Data were then sorted by themes.

I conducted member checking at the school library in a private room. Member checking was conducted between May 25, 2015 and May 31, 2015 and after-school hours at the school library. Each member checking meeting was about 45 minutes. Member checking was conducted for the trustworthiness of my study and contributed to the

credibility of my findings. Thus, member checking was used to validate the accuracy of my interview data and findings. The participants had no revisions after reviewing their individual confidential interview transcriptions were completed.

Findings

Theme 1: Instructional Strategies Should Include Motivators When Teaching

Dominican ESL Students

Theme 1 emerged from the responses to Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10 regarding motivators and demotivators for the acquisition of English as experienced by Dominican students in Puerto Rico. The participants' responses regarding instructional strategies that include motivators were: Participant 1 responded, "The way my teacher explained the instructions was what I like the most." Participant 1 also responded, "I have learned. Thanks, the teacher takes extra time to help me understand what is given in class. Frequently, the teacher explains to me in Spanish." Participant 2 responded, "The teacher takes more time to help me out to complete the work done in class". Participant 3 responded, "The teacher treat me with respect and understanding. Participant 6 responded, "The teachers gave us very interesting activities. I liked the class because the teacher gave us opportunities to practice English." Participant 8 responded, "The teacher helps me with my pronunciation and uses songs and asks us to watch TV programs in English".

Participant 2 responded, "The way the teacher helps me in the class motivates me to learn English." Participant 4 responded, "I feel motivated when my teacher tells me that I am doing great; especially, when my pronunciation sounds better." Participant 5

responded, “I remember when the teacher told us in class that she won’t permit comments when any of us make mistakes, so that makes me feel confident and comfortable.”

Participant 7 responded, “My motivation to keep attending English classes is my goal to become an engineer. I need to become fluent speaking English. I also plan to move to U.S.”

Participant 1 responded, “My English teacher motivates me when she helps me and gives me time to understand the theme of the day.” Participant 4 responded, “I feel motivated when the teacher gives us teamwork, which helps me to interact with others and to learn more vocabulary and be confidence when using the language.”

Excerpts from the interviews included motivators such as explaining the lesson. For example, Participant 1 stated, “The way my teacher explains the instructions, motivates me.” Participant 2 stated, “Explanations motivate me.” Participant 4 stated, “The teacher takes extra time to help me understand what is taught in class.” Participant 5 stated, “Frequent explanations in Spanish help me.” Participant 7 stated, “I like when the teacher gives different learning activities to learn English.” Thus, Participants 1, 3, 4, and 5 stated that they try to learn but they I need help. To motivate Dominican students to acquire English in Puerto Rico, teachers need to include (a) integration of technology in the classroom, (b) use of educational tools such as tablets and iPods, (c) use of online databases, and (d) use English learning blogs.

Positive motivators included integration of technology in the classroom. Technology such as Tablets and iPods and online databases help ESL students. Literacy teachers need to focus on motivators and on learning opportunities for ESL students. Teachers should understand the learning styles of students and modify instruction based

on students' learning styles. Teachers should use class activities to assist ESL students with writing. Teachers should use teaching methods that increase students' learning.

Theme 2: Instructional Strategies Should Not Include Demotivators When Teaching Dominican ESL Students

All participants stated that literacy teachers should not include demotivators in their instructional strategies when teaching Dominican ESL students. All participants were less motivated when literacy teachers were speaking only English. Participant 2 responded, "I have gone through a lot of negative experiences in class, when some of my classmates laugh at me because of my mistakes". Participant 6 responded, "When the teacher corrects me in front of the class, I feel bad and embarrassed, because I do not understand English." Participant 8 responded, "I am very shy." Participant 3 said, "Teachers should be more sensitive toward students like us. In school, I know we are a huge group of Dominicans, and she knows that we never ever took an English class before." Participant 5 responded, "Keep in class conversations short." Participant 2 responded, "We do not use iPods, Internet, Wi-Fi, and some other technologies."

Participant 1 responded, "We need more time. We need more teamwork." Participant 4 responded, "We need time to practice and to learn." Participant 5 responded, "I feel we do not have enough time to practice nor sufficient experiences to speak during class." Participant 7 responded, "Teacher does not give us the opportunity to speak with our partners more frequently during class."

Participant 1 responded, "What makes me lose interest to attend my English class is that most of the time I feel lost in space. I do not understand anything and do not see

class materials to be interesting enough.” Participant 3 responded, “When I make mistakes people around me laugh and make comments. For them it is funny but for me it is frustrating.” Participant 4 responded, “I do not attend my English class when the class becomes difficult for me.” Participant 5 responded, “Our class is not what I expected from the very beginning.” Participant 6 responded, “When classmates make comments and laugh of other people’s participation or responses I always get mad.” Participant 7 responded, “I hate when my teacher gives long assignments to find meanings or complete written exercises.”

Excerpts from the interviews include demotivators. For example, Participant 3 stated, “When the teacher does not explain well a lesson, I have learned very little.” Participant 8 stated, “I feel bad when I have to give a response but I cannot because English is my second language.” Participants 1, 3, 4, and 5 stated, “I try to learn but I need help.” Participants 2, 5, 6, and 8 stated, “I have gone through a lot of negative experiences in class when some of my classmates laugh or make negative comments because of my mistakes.” Most participants stated that certain teaching strategies increase negative feelings toward learning English.

Demotivators included assessments. Teachers’ feedback needs to be specific regarding the learning of English. Learning materials have to be relevant to the curriculum and to include verbal and written practical assignments. Teachers should understand the cultural and learning styles of students. Teachers should use class activities to assist ESL students. Teachers should help students develop literacy and essential skills.

Theme 3: Intensified Support Could Help Dominican Immigrant Students Improve Their Proficiency in English

All participants reported that literacy teachers and school administrators should support Dominican immigrant students by creating a comfortable learning environment. All participants also stated that challenges in learning English existed in every class. Most of the participants reported that more time is needed to learn English. For example, the extra time can be offered after school hours between Monday and Friday or on Saturdays or 3 times a week, for 2 hours daily. After-school ESL programs should be designed for students who have never taken English classes in their home countries.

All participants stated that an ESL program shall be delivered after regular school hours to students who have not taken English classes because these students need more time to learn English. All participants also stated that at least 2 hours of English classes after regular school hours will help them improve their literacy skills. Participants 1, 2-4, 6-8 stated that Dominican students need more time to practice English.

Literacy teachers need to be more sensitive to different cultures. Literacy teachers should focus on verbal activities in order to help Dominican students improve their proficiency in English. Literacy teachers should use interactive activities for Dominican students to focus on pronunciation and speaking through class group conversations.

The after-school literacy teachers should integrate technology into the intensified support for ESL classes. All participants stated that literacy teachers should use computer programs in the classroom. For example, Participant 2 stated, “iPods are helpful in the classroom.” Participant 3 responded, “There are interactive ESL computer

programs that could be beneficial in the English class.” Participants 1 and 4-8 stated that the use of tablets and video cameras are helpful in ESL classes.

Literacy teachers should focus on teamwork and role play. For example, participants wished their teachers involved students in more group practical exercises. The focus of the lesson should be on the interests of the students. For example, participant 2 stated, “We need time to practice to learn English.” Participants 1 and 3-8 responded that teachers shall give students opportunities to practice speaking English.

The responses of the participants confirmed that Dominican immigrant students are not supported by teachers. Therefore, English classes must be conducted with the focus on helping these students to improve their proficiency in English. Example to improve proficiency in English include pronunciation, group conversations, and interactive activities through education technology.

Dominican immigrant students reported being lost in regular ESL classes. These students expressed interest in having literacy teachers who understand their culture and help them to develop reading and writing skills to compete in the 21st century. These students need more time and motivational strategies to learn English.

The participants made suggestions for improving their learning of English as a second language. Responses to Interview Questions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were used for this theme. Suggestions for the Puerto Rico Department of Education to improve the learning of English include:

Participant 1 responded, “I suggest starting an after-school program for students like us, who have never taken English classes.” Participant 2 responded, “I would suggest

offering additional time after school to help us learn English. I would say that after-school hours or weekends can help us.” Participant 3 responded, “I suggest to allow us to use computer programs to learn English after- school hours in the school library.” Participant 5 responded, “I will propose that instead of 50 minutes of class, the school must offer at least 2 hours of English classes after- school hours.” Participant 8 responded, “I recommend more time for English class after- school hours, with interactive activities leaving apart the writing and focusing on pronouncing and speaking.”

Summary of Themes

Participant 3 responded, “I recommend to my teacher to be more sensitive toward students like us. In school, I know we are a huge group of Dominicans, and she knows that we never ever took an English class before.” Participant 5 responded, “I would suggest stopping writing and writing. I recommend keeping conversations in class.” Participant 7 responded, “We need more verbal activities in the school and out of the school. I know of some excellent computer programs that could be used in the classroom.” Participant 8 responded, “I think that if my teacher teaches the English class fully in English, and students must be forced to pay attention and try to use the language.”

Participant 2 responded, “It would be nice to use iPods, Internet, Wi-Fi, and some other technologies.” Participant 3 responded, “There are interactive computer programs that could be beneficial in the English class.” Participant 8 responded, “I recommend the use of tablets, iPods, microphones, video cameras, and audiovisual tools.”

Participant 1 responded, "I think we need more time. We need more teamwork. I enjoy when the teacher gives us a role play and we delivered the themes working as a group." Participant 2 responded, "We need teachers who involve us in a practical exercise. I mean, if a teacher gives us assignments that really interest us, we can make an effort to try to understand better." Participant 2 also responded, "If we have the opportunity to interchange thoughts and ideas with people coming from the US, so we can learn pronunciation." Participant 4 responded, "I think that we need an expanded time to practice and to learn. Sometimes, I feel lost, because Puerto Rican students have had more time learning English than us. We are just starting." Participant 5 responded, "I feel we do not have enough time to practice nor sufficient experiences to speak during class. She speaks English very nice and I would like to do the same." Participant 7 responded, "I want my teacher to give us the opportunity to speak with our partners more frequently during class. We do not practice enough."

Participant 1 responded, "I used to go to the beach often. I have had the chance to dialogue with tourists coming from the U.S. It has helped me a lot." Participant 1 responded, "I have felt good doing that, would be great to have people who speak English in our class." Participant 2 responded, "Having someone whose first language is English would help us much. It would help us feel confidence when trying to use the language." Participant 3 responded, "I think I need that kind of experience, because I usually feel scared when someone talks to me in English. It would be positive." Participant 4 responded, "I am always afraid when an English-speaking person talks to me or ask me a question. I do not have enough vocabulary to keep a conversation but anyway I would

like to learn some day to speak English.” Participant 5 responded, “Would be beneficial for us to have conversations with people who speak English in class. Puerto Ricans speak very well in class and our teacher should develop activities that could encourage us to practice the English language every day.” Participant 6 responded, “Having experiences with speakers of English, I am sure would make me pay more attention and make efforts to learn and speak English in a better manner.”

In conclusion, all participants suggested that teachers and school administrators should support ESL students by creating a positive learning environment. Most of the participants suggested the extended time from regular schedule directed to English class; after school hours, Saturdays or can be done 3 times a week, for 2 hours daily. The majority of the participants suggested after-school ESL programs for these students who have never taken English classes in their home countries. Almost all participants suggested for technology to be integrated into the English curriculum.

Dominican immigrant students reported that they need help to improve their English proficiency. Participant 1 stated, “My teacher shall use technology to explain new words.” Participant 2 stated, “I need to see the explanations of new words.” Participant 3 stated, “Why do we not use laptops? This teacher does not explain anything.” Participant 4 stated, “Why is the teacher just teaching without checking to see if I understand.” Participant 5 stated, “Explanations in Spanish help me but this teacher refuses to translate English into Spanish.” Participant 6 stated, “I do not understand why the teacher is not using visual aids.” Participant 7 stated, “Why the teacher does not use other teaching activities on a computer or laptop.” Participant 8 stated, “I want to use the

Internet to learn to speak English.” In conclusión, the findings include suggestions for intensified support for clases to help Dominican immigrant students improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school.

Thus, school administrators should also support teachers to help ESL students and should provide resources and professional development training to teachers in order to meet students' needs. School administrators should offer after-school programs as remediation to help students because ESL students are underprepared for literacy clases.

Discrepant Cases

Discrepant cases include data that are considered to be outliers or hold inconsistencies with the initially identified themes or categories. Discrepant cases provide contrary evidence regarding the perspectives in relation to the central phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Discrepant cases were considered. The discrepant cases could help the school and district administrators with decision-making processes regarding after-school ESL programs. Discrepant cases will also assist policymakers with intensified support for ESL clases . The participants referred to the instructional strategies of the literacy teachers. For example, literacy teachers did not explain new vocabulary or the explanations did not help students understand the meaning of new vocabulary. Some literacy teachers did not explain new vocabulary at all. Other teachers used the Socratic method to teach without engaging students. Some literacy teachers spoke English and Spanish and the explanations they provided to students in their native language, which is Spanish, helped them understand the lesson.

Some participants questioned why teachers did not use other teaching activities. Some participants also expressed frustration because literacy teachers did not explain the lesson and students did not understand what the teacher was teaching. Participants reported that teachers did not help them improve their speaking skills. Participants also reported that teachers did not help them to improve their English proficiency. Participants questioned why teachers were not using visual aids or computers to teach English. For example, participants 1-7 stated, “Teacher did not explain new words.” Participants 2-7 stated that “the teacher is just teaching.” Participant 6 stated, “I do not understand what the teacher is teaching.” Participant 7 stated, “Why the teacher does not use other teaching activities.” Participant 5 stated, “Explanations in Spanish help me but this teacher refuses to translate English into Spanish.”

Dominican immigrant students, who have recently arrived in Puerto Rico, need to be taught in a flexible teaching environment where teachers use effective ESL strategies for these students to improve their English language proficiency. Teaching strategies could include student-centered instruction in ESL classes for high school students who have not taken English classes before. These high school students need to be motivated to be successful in their ESL classes. Student motivation and engagement in the classroom and technology integration into the curriculum help Dominican immigrant students learn English. These findings could be used by district administrators to develop an after-school program that will provide Dominican immigrant students with opportunities to learn English and graduate from high school. The after-school program should include technology and interactive learning.

Summary of Findings

Positive motivators included integration of technology in the classroom because technology helps students learn English (Theme 1). The participants reported that when technology such as Tablets and iPods is integrated into the curriculum, students may get better jobs. The participants also reported that online databases help them learn new vocabulary and improve their pronunciation.

Demotivators included assessments (Theme 2). The participants reported that feedback from teachers needs to be specific regarding the learning of English. The participants also reported that teaching and learning materials have to be relevant to the curriculum and to include verbal and written practical assignments.

Intensified support for ESL classes (Theme 3). intensified support for ESL classes can help these students learn English. The participants reported that a flexible teaching environment could help these students improve their English language proficiency. The participants also reported that student-centered instruction in ESL classes for high school students are beneficial to those who have not taken English classes before.

Significance of the Findings

Based on the themes that emerged, literacy teachers should use motivators within instructional strategies, and should be aware of demotivators regarding students' proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school. The study results in social change by strengthening ESL students' English and literacy support, thereby allowing ESL students to succeed academically, and graduate facilitating the opportunity to join the workforce or attend college.

The findings of this study shed light on how to help Dominican high school students who immigrated to Puerto Rico to graduate from high school. ESL students in Puerto Rico demonstrate low proficiency in English (PRDOE, 2016) and motivation impacts the learning of these students. Earning a high school diploma is not a guarantee for ESL students (ACT, 2017) because they struggle academically (Karp & Bork, 2014).

The motivation of the participating students was to increase their proficiency in English. Immigrant Dominican high school students would benefit if they participate in an after-school ESL program in order to increase their proficiency in English and graduate from high school. When these high school graduate they will either join the workforce or attend college. Students who participate in language interventions achieve higher rates of completion of high school (Zucker et al., 2013). Without interventions language gains may not be sustainable (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014). Motivation is a stimulus to learn a second language (Tabar & Rezaei, 2015). After-school programs provide students with learning opportunities and have a positive impact on ESL students (Baker, 2013) because these programs help students develop literacy skills (Short & Boyson, 2012) by motivating them (Conley & French, 2014; Karp & Bork, 2014). After-school programs are good interventions (Oh et al., 2014).

School district administrators could use the findings of this study to make decisions to allocate ESL teachers and teaching resources for the after-school ESL program. School administrators should offer remediation classes to help students (Mangan, 2017) because these students are underprepared for literacy classes (Hassel & Giordano, 2015). School administrators should encourage teachers to implement

alternative literacy activities (Hamilton, 2015). School and district administrators should provide resources and professional development training to teachers (Mertler, 2016; Milner et al., 2013) to develop school activities to help students pass tests (Jones & Deutsch, 2013).

ESL teachers could use the findings of this study to help these students graduate from high school. Teachers should understand the cultural and learning styles of students and their learning style (Manolios et al., 2013; McDougal, 2015) by developing class activities that assist students to understand complex texts (Roger, 2014). Teachers should prepare all students for college and careers (PRDOE, 2017) by making instructional decisions that can change students' performance (Airmail, 2016). Teachers who teach Spanish-speaking students should use cooperative learning groups (Rolon, 2013).

Positive social change could include an improvement of literacy proficiency when these students will attend an after-school ESL program. Demotivators include teaching strategies, course material, course content, and learning environment to learn a new language (Rashidi & Moghadam, 2014). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) posited teachers could interact with students on an individual level to meet the individual needs of students. Teachers should use motivators within instructional strategies and should be aware of demotivators regarding students' proficiency in English. Teachers should focus on allowing ESL students to succeed academically and graduate to join the workforce or attend college.

Literacy teachers need to focus on interventions (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014) because the classroom environment continues to diversify (Kosutic, 2017). Learning

opportunities should be for all students including ESL students (USDOE, 2017). Demotivating learners results in negative students' attitudes toward learning (Kikuchi, 2015). Teachers can reduce demotivation (Molavi & Biria, 2013) and increase classroom engagement (Conley & French, 2014). Teachers need to be aware of students' personality, which determines motivation (Kyllonen, Lipnevich, Burrus, & Roberts, 2014).

Teachers should understand the cultural and learning styles of students (McDougal, 2015) and modify instruction based on students' learning styles (Manolis et al., 2013). Teachers should use class activities to assist ESL students (Roger, 2014) with writing (Fisher & Frey, 2015). Language class activities help students (Donaldson, 2016). Teachers should use teaching methods to increase students' learning (Murphy & Torff, 2016) and to develop higher-level thinking (Hill, 2014). Teachers should help students develop literacy (Mertler, 2016) and essential skills (Murphy & Torff, 2016). Teachers who teach Spanish-speaking students should use cooperative learning (Rolon, 2013).

School administrators should also support teachers to help ESL students (Hamilton, 2015). School district administrators should provide resources and professional development training to teachers (Milner et al., 2013) in order to meet students' needs (Mertler, 2016). After-school programs give ESL students a chance to learn more (Baker, 2013). School administrators should offer after-school programs as remediation to help students (Mangan, 2017) because ESL students are underprepared for literacy classes (Hassel & Giordano, 2015). After-school programs are good interventions

(Oh, Osgood, & Smith, 2014) for English language learners (Short & Boyson, 2012). Gardner and Lambert (2009) affirmed the integration of ESL students helps them learn a new language. Educational technologies affect ESL students' learning (Davidson & Candy, 2016; Hjalmarsson, 2015).

Description of the Project

Based on the emergent themes that literacy teachers should use motivators within instructional strategies and extra intensified support for ESL classes to help Dominican immigrant ESL students to improve their proficiency in English in order to graduate from high school in Puerto Rico, I recommend a supplemental ESL program to be offered during a school year between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm Monday to Friday. The intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program is to help Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico to improve their proficiency in English. The goals of the after-school program are to: (a) serve the needs of the ESL students as an intervention initiative to help them graduate from high school, (b) offer ESL students' academic support to develop academic skills, and (c) create a positive learning environment where teachers will use differentiated instruction and research-based assessment strategies.

Developing, implementing, and evaluating the intensified support for ESL classes could provide school and district administrators with resources for improving proficiency in English and promoting the white paper in the metropolitan area of San Juan. A program evaluation may assist in making decisions regarding the support for this kind of extra intensified support for ESL classes program to other school districts. The number

of ESL students graduating from high school may increase due to the effectiveness of new programs.

Human and Capital Resources for the Project

Potential and existing recourses will be identified from the school administrator. Funding will be needed from federal funding for Title I, Title II, and Title III programs. I will submit a copy of the designed after-school hours ESL program for funding. The creation of alliances with the local universities may facilitate funding and support the project. Details of the after-school program are outlined in Table 1. Allocations of funds for ESL materials including supplemental teaching materials are needed to support ESL students and senior district administrators will allocate funds and resources.

Funding is needed for the after-school intensified support for ESL classes program, which might be a barrier for the implementation of the proposed project. Another barrier could be the time to implement the ESL program. Other barriers could include the recruitment of highly qualified literacy teachers to teach between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm Monday to Friday. Technical barriers might consist of school management, technology issues, lack of materials, and communication issues. A potential solution is to arrange for funding from the federal government via a grant. A potential technical barrier would be the inability to connect to technology. A potential solution is to use a cross-compatible program such as Google.

Direction of the Project

A white paper was developed to address the recommendation of the ESL after school program in addition to providing professional development for ESL teachers. The

study will result in social change by strengthening ESL students' English and literacy support, thereby allowing ESL students to succeed academically, and graduate facilitating the opportunity to join the workforce or attend college. I will recommend to the Puerto Rico Department Education and to school districts to offer an after-school program that will be a supplemental program during the school year between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. A continual evaluation is important to provide evidence of the program's impact on ESL students' English proficiency. The direction of the project may be implemented by surrounding school districts serving Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico. The teaching content could include conversational activities focusing on the acquisition of vocabulary, literacy materials for adolescents, technology integration, socio-cultural interventions, motivational activities, and counseling.

Intensified Support for ESL Classes

The intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program is designed for Dominican immigrant ESL high school students to improve their proficiency in English and to graduate from high school. The program has been developed and the literacy materials are for high school students with the focus on Dominican immigrant ESL students. The program consists of reading interventions and motivational strategies to help Dominican immigrant ESL students with English language acquisition to graduate from high school. This program is being recommended as a policy recommendation to support Dominican Immigrant students in high school in order to improve English language acquisition and graduation from high school.

Creator and Stakeholders of the Intensified Program

I am the first-born male in my family and proud to be the first novice researcher. I learned that research is a rigorous process and an inspiration. I am truly a lifelong learner. I conducted this project with enthusiasm regarding ESL students as an ESL teacher. I have worked for over 20 years with Dominican immigrant students and learned to appreciate them. This project study was for me a great experience as I learned how to conduct interviews, analyze data, and present my findings. I will apply my experience in my daily work and will be writing applications for grants to gain access to ESL resources to be used in classrooms to help ESL students.

The intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program will help the school and district administrators with resources to help immigrant students attending public high schools to pass standardized tests to graduate from high school. The program will help ESL students develop academic and social skills. Literacy teachers who will be teaching at the after-school program will be supported to help their students improve their proficiency in English in Puerto Rico by using high-quality teaching materials.

Roles and Responsibilities of District and School Administrators

As a researcher and an educator, I was responsible for designing and implementing the white paper for the after-school program. I will continue to explain the after-school program to administrators at other school districts to offer the after-school program as an intervention for ESL students to improve their literacy skills. I will continue to recommend research-based teaching strategies to literacy teachers for ESL students. Administrators at other school districts who will decide to offer the program as

an intervention for ESL students will be responsible for capital and human resources. School district administrators at the other school districts will be responsible for the aforementioned resources to implement the after-school program.

Goal of the Program

The goal of the program is to make change to the local school district for ESL students to graduate from high school. The program will help stakeholders school and district administrators, politicians, policymakers, ESL teachers, and researchers to apply the findings for the betterment of the local community. My vision to address the ESL problem at the research site was to increase the awareness of the after-school program in order to increase the number of ESL high school graduates.

Teachers of the intensified support for ESL classes for an after-school program will facilitate students' acquisition of the language through social interaction. The quality of the program is based on the enhancement of learning by providing learning opportunities to increase ESL students' collaboration and interests. The program is developed to meet students' academic goals such as supporting learning and academic achievement. The literacy teachers will use strategies for all ESL students to meet their unique needs at the secondary level.

The program has been implemented at the research site. Highly qualified ESL teachers have been recruited for the after-school program where these teachers will be offered a professional development in the summer of 2017. Research-based teaching resources (<http://www.lmacademics.com/school-courses-esl/>) will be made available to literacy teachers who will teach the after-school program. The program will be offered

each academic year, which is between August and May. The program will be evaluated at the end of every academic term in order to measure its impact on ESL students in terms of passing literacy state tests and graduating from high school.

The program is a literacy intervention program designed for ESL students. The uniqueness of the program that each class will have literacy-related activities based on participants' unique academic needs. The classroom activities will be discovery-based designed to help students increase their proficiency in English. Students in the program will work both independently and in small groups where the literacy teacher will be the facilitator of learning.

Uniqueness of the Program

The development of the program was a laborious task in order to help ESL students. The program was a process where I used existing models for ESL programs to be developed and evaluated; however, the after-school program is unique for the San Juan Metropolitan area. This program is unique because of the vision and mission of the school district where ESL students register with limited knowledge of written and spoken English. The after-school program will prepare ESL students including Dominican immigrant students to improve their proficiency in English by using cognitive activities, intense projects, and practical applications.

Locations for Program

The San Juan metropolitan area has more than 30 suburbs. ESL students are attending the high school at the research-site and reside in the suburbs of Obrero, Playita, Buena Vista, Puerto Nuevo, San Jose, and Santurce. Literacy teachers of the after-school

program will be assisted in creating learning environments where ESL students feel comfortable learning English. Teachers will be encouraged to teach ESL students without prejudice when students (a) speak with heavy accents, (b) are ridiculed, (c) make grammatical errors, (d) have limited vocabulary, and (e) lack information about social factors.

Supplemental ESL Program

The program will be a supplemental program during the school year offered between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. The supplemental program should be implemented by surrounding school districts serving Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico. The supplemental program should include conversational activities focusing on the acquisition of vocabulary, literacy materials for adolescents, technology integration, socio-cultural interventions, motivational activities, and counseling. Funding

Federal funding for Title I, Title II, and Title III programs will be needed for the implementation of the after-school program at various school districts in Puerto Rico. Local educational organizations and communities will be encouraged to donate teaching materials and educational technologies.

Alliances

Alliances with the local universities and colleges and private educational organizations will be created in order to share educational resources for ESL teachers and students. Public and private universities could offer help on guest speakers. Local colleges could offer educational technologies for ESL students to practice English

activities. These higher education institutions could offer ESL materials and activities that are research-based for ESL high school students.

Impact of the Program

The program has a potential impact on local social change for ESL students to graduate from high school. When ESL students will graduate from high school, they may go to college or university or get jobs in the community. The more these ESL students graduate, the more they contribute to the community. The local community of Dominican immigrant students will have the opportunity to receive acquisition of English as a second language by improving their proficiency in English and graduate from high school. Policymakers, ESL literacy teachers, and school and district administrators will work collaboratively to support after-school programs that will focus on English language acquisition for Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico.

Dominican Students Is the Focus of the Program

The focus of the program is to assist Dominican immigrant high school students who arrive in Puerto Rico with very low proficiency in English and who attend ESL classes to improve their proficiency in English. Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) has not been offering instructional strategies to ESL teachers or programs to these students to improve their proficiency in English. Based on the findings of this doctoral study, I recommend the after-school program to help Dominican immigrant students in Puerto Rico to improve their proficiency in English.

Dominican ESL Students and the ESL Program

The program is an example to help Dominican immigrant students. I will help

policymakers develop academic standards for ESL Dominican immigrant students. ESL students will have access to research-based enriched content and teaching strategies to improve their proficiency in English. Even though Puerto Ricans' main language is Spanish, the education in public schools has been primarily conducted in English. Every year, immigrant students who arrive in Puerto Rico have very low proficiency in English. Teacher for the after-school program will be encouraged to pay attention to students with less proficiency in English. Students will be provided with a conducive and stress-free learning environment with interactive and creative activities to learn English at the after-school program.

Success of ESL Curriiculum for an After-school Program

The success of the after-school program will depend on the use of differentiated instructional strategies by the literacy teachers who could encourage stronger ESL student interest in the after-school program. The success of the after-school program will also depend on the needs of the local communities serving a similar sample.

Replication and Limitations of the Program

The after-school program's replication should include a larger sample and a mixed-methods research design to identify the factors why these students have challenges with ESL classes. A possible factor that could have an impact on the after-school program is funding. District and school administrators shall examine the needs of ESL Dominican immigrant students and the available teaching resources literacy teachers need to have. These administrators could support the after-school program to help the local communities serve the needs of ESL Dominican immigrant students. These

administrators should care about the needs of the program that could have an impact on ESL students' achievement. These administrators should support teachers to improve their teaching practice and student.

The after-school program is focused on helping ESL Dominican immigrant students improve their proficiency in English. The after-school program is limited to one public high school within a school district where ESL Dominican immigrant students participated in the study. The after-school program is also limited to a small sample of public high school ESL students in San Juan metropolitan area who were from low socioeconomic status.

Teaching Strategies and Content of the After-school Program

The after-school program is based on research-based findings that will help literacy teachers and school administrators make decisions for the preparation of ESL students to graduate from high school. I have developed the after-school program by using my creativity and expertise as an ESL educator, school principal, and adult program director. I have helped ESL students at all academic levels. The after-school program includes motivation and demotivation factors and suggestions regarding English language acquisition at the high school level for ESL students to improve literacy. School and district administrators, ESL teachers, and policymakers will be encouraged to work collaboratively to support the after-school program.

After-school Program Evaluation

Every academic term, ESL students, literacy teachers, and parents will share their perceptions of the after-school program. Such feedback is necessary to evaluate the

impact of the after-school program on ESL students. Specifically, the after-school program evaluation will be focused on ESL students' proficiency in English and their graduation from high school. The following PowerPoint slides will be used at the research site and to district administrators interested in offering the after-school program to ESL students.

Students' Interactions and the Program

The after-school program will provide students with learning opportunities to increase their collaboration and interests. ESL students will be assisted in having clear goals to learn grammar-based content in a classroom environment with teaching materials to facilitate learner interactions with each other and with native English speakers.

The after-school program will help Dominican immigrant students attending ESL classes in Puerto Rico to have positive learning experiences. ESL students need opportunities to develop proficiency in English through interaction with peers and teachers. Literacy teachers of the after-school program will be providing linguistically and culturally appropriate information to ESL students. Teachers will help ESL students with language acquisition. Literacy teachers will focus on making language learners feel comfortable by creating a fun environment in the classroom.

Cultural Differences and the Program

Dominican immigrant students report that their cultural differences result in difficulties in ESL courses. These students are challenged with language barriers and demonstrate low proficiency in English. The after-school program will consist of teaching materials as motivating factors for English learners. Motivation has an impact

on ESL learning. The after-school program focuses on motivation because motivation is required when learning another language.

Professional Development for Literacy Teachers to Teach the Program

The after-school program will be offered via a professional development for literacy teachers. The implementation of the after-school program with professional development opportunities for ESL teachers will impact student success. ESL teachers and school administrators will be encouraged to dialogue about ESL concerns on a regular basis through the Principal Advisory Council at the high school.

General Teaching Strategies for Literacy Teachers

Literacy teachers should use positive motivators to teach Dominican students English. Literacy teachers should also integrate educational technology into the intensified support for ESL classes. For example, videos, tablets, and iPods could help these student in learning ESL. Another example is that literacy teachers should use online databases for students to learn vocabularies. Online sources could help literacy teachers motivate students to learn independently while the teacher is the facilitator aiming at meeting the individual academic needs of students. Teachers as facilitators could use English learning blogs for students to interact with peers.

Demotivators and Literacy Teachers

Literacy teachers should not use demotivators to teach Dominican students English. Demotivators included long assignments assigned by the teachers, not enough feedback provided by the teachers, and teaching materials were not helpful to these students. Literacy teachers should use effective strategies to help ESL students learn

English. Dominican immigrant students, who have recently arrived in Puerto Rico, need to be taught in a flexible teaching environment where teachers use effective ESL strategies for these students to improve their English language proficiency. Teaching strategies could include student-centered instruction in ESL classes for high school students who have not taken English classes before. These high school students need to be motivated to be successful in their ESL classes. Student motivation and engagement in the classroom and technology integration into the curriculum to help Dominican immigrant students learn English.

Timetable for the ESL Program

The weekly schedule is as follow:

Table 1

Weekly Schedule

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 3:00 | Sign in | Sign in | Sign in | Sign in | Sign in |
| 3:10 | /snacks | /snacks | /snacks | /snacks | /snacks |
| 3:10 | Cultural | Real-life | One-on-one | Teamwork | Technology |
| 4:10 | immersion | experiences | social | Presentations | Integration |
| | activities | | conversations | | |
| 4:10 | Real-life | One-on-one | Real-life | One-on-one | Technology |
| 5:00 | experiences | social | experiences | social | integration |
| | | conversations | | conversation | activities |
| 4:30 | One-on-one | Technology | Teamwork | Real | Recreational |
| 5:00 | social | Integration | Presentations | experiences | activities |
| | conversations | | | | |

Classroom Activities

Cultural immersion activities: The opportunity for each participant to understand the teaching content and to integrate into the new culture. The activities will include role playing and the celebration of local and Dominican festivities. ESL teachers will facilitate classroom activities by using videos, music, short stories, and guest speakers to enhance students' ESL proficiency.

One-on-one social conversations: Students will develop speaking skills. Topics will be assigned based on teaching themes.

Real-life experiences: English native guest speakers will be invited to share learning experiences and to actively participate in each teaching activity. Classroom activities with the guests will promote the students' participation in dialogue with peers and the guest speakers.

Recreational activities: Drama, musicals, and conferences will be part of this project.

Teamwork Presentations: Teachers will assign teamwork activities for students to work in groups for language acquisition.

Technology integration: Technological tools such as tablets, desktop computers, cell phones, television sets, video cameras, voice recorders, and so forth will be used for the creation of integrated lessons.

Research-based Content of the After-school Program

Research-based teaching resources (<http://www.lmacademics.com/school-courses-esl/>) will be made available to literacy teachers who will teach the after-school program. The after-school program will be offered each academic year, which is between August and May. The after-school program will be evaluated at the end of every academic term in order to measure its impact on ESL students in terms of passing literacy state tests and graduating from high school.

The after-school program is a literacy intervention program designed for ESL students. The uniqueness of the after-school program that each class will have literacy-related activities based on participants' unique academic needs. The classroom activities will be discovery-based designed to help students increase their proficiency in English. Students in the program will work both independently and in small groups where the literacy teacher will be the facilitator of learning.

Project Evaluation Plan

After I present the intensified support for ESL classes content to administrators and teachers, I will conduct face-to-face interviews with students, literacy teachers, and parents to share their perceptions of the program in order for me to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses to revise its content. Face-to-face interviews will be conducted every academic term at the sites offering the after-school program. Feedback from these stakeholders is necessary for me evaluate the after-school program in terms of what works and what does not. Evaluations will include the effectiveness and impact of the after-school program on students' proficiency in English. Evaluations will be both

formative and summative.

Project Implications

Language awareness should be incorporated in all areas and levels of the curriculum because language is intrinsic to the learning carried out in all academic subjects (Halle et al., 2012). Leaving explicit grammar for high school and allowing younger students to develop their own sense of language functions and forms would help reduce fear and increase motivation (Bolderston et al., 2008). The systematic preparation in phonemic consciousness can develop literacy outcomes for ESL students learning to read English (Meunier & Granger, 2008). Low-performance readers, including bilingual students who are not native English speakers, can gain from systematic instruction that focuses on phonological awareness, which is connected to literacy (Halle et al., 2012).

The findings of this doctoral study will have an impact on local social change for Dominican immigrant students to graduate from high school. The findings of this study should be used by policymakers, ESL literacy teachers, and school and district administrators in Puerto Rico to create after-school programs to help Dominican immigrant students graduate from high school. Dominican immigrant students who will attend an after-school program will become more proficient in English.

The implementation of an after-school program to help Dominican immigrant students graduate from high school could be used as a quality literacy intervention to help these students pass literacy state tests. The improvement of literacy of Dominican immigrant students at the high school will help the local communities in Puerto Rico because these students could enroll in college programs or join the workforce.

The findings of this study can be helpful to district administrators in Puerto Rico for decision-making processes to help Dominican immigrant students graduate from high school. The finding of this study should encourage high school administrators to offer professional development opportunities for literacy teachers to teach in after-school programs. The focus of professional development for literacy teachers would be on differentiated instruction to help Dominican immigrant high students improve reading vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension of the content within their grade levels.

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MOTIVATORS AND DEMOTIVATORS OF
DOMINICAN IMMIGRANTS
HIGH SCHOOL ESL STUDENTS IN
PUERTO RICO

by

Luis A. Amador

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

- ▶ Using a variety of instructional strategies, the teacher will provide opportunities for students to develop skills of inquiry, problem solving, and communication as they investigate and learn fundamental concepts.
- ▶ The integration of critical thinking and critical literacy will help students to problem solve.

**TOOL FOR REASONING AND PROBLEM SOLVING
BLEND OF BOTH PROCESS AND CONTENT**

Critical Thinking and Inquiry Skills in the Curriculum

- ▶ This ESL program focuses on developing students' critical thinking and inquiry skills
- ▶ Students will develop their appreciation of, and engagement with, the multilayered subject matter
- ▶ Students will be supported to move towards deeper understanding

**EXAMINATIONS OF OPINIONS, VALUES, BIASES
AND MEANINGS**

Inquiry Process

- ▶ Formulating questions
- ▶ Gathering and organizing evidence
- ▶ Interpreting and analyzing evidence
- ▶ Evaluating evidence and drawing conclusions
- ▶ Communicating findings
- ▶ Students will develop their appreciation of, and engagement with, the multilayered subject matter
- ▶ Students will be supported to move towards deeper understanding

**APPRECIATION OF AND ENGAGEMENT WITH ESL
SUBJECT MATTER**

Critical thinking

Apply steps of the inquiry process toward examinations of opinions, values, biases and meanings

Literacy teachers will support students' development of these skills by modeling in the classroom, providing ongoing and varied opportunities to exercise.

**ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION WILL FOCUS ON
STUDENTS' EFFECTIVE USE OF CRITICAL
THINKING SKILLS**

Differentiated Teaching

Multiple methods of instruction blending

- information
- communication and
- technology

with multimedia resources, reading, writing, oral, numeracy, kinesthetic activities, and information sharing

A DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

Direct Instruction Strategies

- Demonstration
- Directed Reading
- Practice and Drill
- Lecture Notes
- Visual Stimuli
- Work Sheets
- Thinking Activities

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Activity Based Strategies

- ▶ Repetition
- ▶ Practice
- ▶ Simulation

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Independent Learning Strategies

- ▶ Homework
- ▶ Independent Reading
- ▶ Independent Study
- ▶ Memorization
- ▶ Note Making

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Technology and Media Based Applications

- ▶ Communication Applications
- ▶ Computer-assisted Instruction
- ▶ Graphic Applications
- ▶ Media Presentation
- ▶ Catalogues

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Arts-based and Cooperative Strategies

- ▶ Sketching to Learn
- ▶ Making Models
- ▶ Peer Discussions
- ▶ Peer Assessments

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Research and Inquiry Skills

- ▶ Cognitive Skills Model
- ▶ Problem-based Models
- ▶ Questioning Process
- ▶ Research Process
- ▶ Scientific Method

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Thinking Skills

- ▶ Brainstorming
- ▶ Case Study
- ▶ Classifying
- ▶ Issue-based Analysis
- ▶ Model Making
- ▶ Problem Posing
- ▶ Problem Solving

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Planning Skills

- ▶ Defining a Problem
- ▶ Acquiring Relevant Information
- ▶ Organization of Data, Research, and Ideas

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Processing Skills

- ▶ Clarifying
- ▶ Identifying Components and Attributes
- ▶ Distinguishing Components and Attributes
- ▶ Inferring
- ▶ Predicting
- ▶ Connecting and Combining Information

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Assessment for Learning

- ▶ Assignments
- ▶ Quizzes
- ▶ Rough writing drafts
- ▶ Practice worksheets
- ▶ Review

ASSESSMENT

Assessment as Learning

- ▶ Forums
- ▶ Reviews
- ▶ Self-proofreading
- ▶ Teacher feedback

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of Learning

- ▶ Research papers
- ▶ Tests
- ▶ Exam

ASSESSMENT

Learning Skills

- ▶ Responsibility
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Independent work
- ▶ Collaboration
- ▶ Initiative, and
- ▶ Self-regulation

ASSESSMENT

Independent, Strategic, and Successful Students

Teachers will use differentiated instructional approaches such as:

- ▶ adjusting the method or pace of instruction
- ▶ using a variety of resources
- ▶ allowing a wide choice of topics
- ▶ adjusting the learning environment
- ▶ scaffolding instruction

UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS

Teachers' Approaches

- ▶ Adjusting the method or pace of instruction
- ▶ Using a variety of resources
- ▶ Allowing a wide choice of topics
- ▶ Adjusting the learning environment
- ▶ Scaffolding instruction

HELPING STUDENTS

Students with Special Educational Needs

- ▶ Literacy teachers will take into consideration the wide range of learning styles and needs of students
- ▶ Literacy teachers will develop Student Support Plans to decide differentiated instruction strategies

HELPING STUDENTS

Teachers' Guidelines

- ▶ All students have the ability to succeed
- ▶ Each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning
- ▶ Differentiated instruction for the needs of any group of students
- ▶ Support students with special education needs

HELPING STUDENTS

Accommodations

- ▶ Extra Time
- ▶ speech recording and dictation
- ▶ Break down assignments
- ▶ Materials available in large print
- ▶ Digital and hard copies of notes

HELPING STUDENTS

Individual Learning Styles

- ▶ Visual/Spatial
- ▶ Aural/Auditory
- ▶ Verbal/Linguistic
- ▶ Physical/Kinesthetic

HELPING STUDENTS

Individual Learning Styles

- ▶ Solitary/Intrapersonal
- ▶ Social/Interpersonal
- ▶ Logical/Mathematical
- ▶ Naturalist

HELPING STUDENTS

Tools for Individual Learning Styles

- ▶ Imagery
- ▶ Video
- ▶ Graphic Organizers
- ▶ Podcast; MP3; Talk Text-to-Voice; Dragon Dictation
- ▶ Outdoor Activities
- ▶ Individual reading, writing, learning, and assessment
- ▶ Discussion Forums

HELPING STUDENTS

Adaptations and Strategies for this Program

- ▶ Subject-specific dictionary
- ▶ Bilingual Dictionaries (Google Translator)
- ▶ Instructions via text and video
- ▶ Graphic organizers
- ▶ Scaffolding

HELPING STUDENTS

More Adaptations and Strategies for this Program

- ▶ Conferencing
- ▶ Direct feedback
- ▶ Pre-writing strategies
- ▶ Journal
- ▶ Previewing course readings
- ▶ Use materials that reflect cultural diversity
- ▶ Editing checklist

HELPING STUDENTS

Supporting Students

- ▶ Increase the focus in school strategic planning to promote success and well-being of students
- ▶ Focus on narrowing the achievement gap
- ▶ Identify and share resources to help improve student achievement
- ▶ Respond to the learning and cultural needs of students

HELPING STUDENTS

Supporting Students

- ▶ Simulations
- ▶ Multimedia resources
- ▶ Databases, and
- ▶ Computer-assisted learning modules

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Equity and Inclusive Education

- ▶ Respect diversity
- ▶ Promote inclusive education
- ▶ Identify and eliminate discriminatory biases
- ▶ Help all students to learn, grow, and contribute to society

DIVERSE STUDENTS

Equity and Inclusive Education

- ▶ Learning activities will including discussions where students integrate and share personal experience naturally
- ▶ Enhance the learning environment where students collaborate

DIVERSE STUDENTS

Ethics

- ▶ Literacy teachers will provide varied opportunities for students to learn about ethical issues
- ▶ Students will explore the role of ethics in decision making
- ▶ Students will learn how to make ethical judgements when evaluating evidence and positions on various issues

STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF ETHICS

Appendix B: After-school Program Evaluation

Evaluation Form

As a participant, please evaluate the ESL after-school program by using the following. This evaluation form will assist us to improve the ESL after-school program.

Instructional Practices Evaluation

1. The after-school teacher involves students.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___
2. The after-school teacher provides classroom activities.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___
3. The after-school teacher uses group activities.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___
4. I use audiovisual materials in the after-school program.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___
5. Students communicate in English.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___
6. We are encouraged to share cultural experiences.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___
7. The teacher explains the language acquisition process.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___
8. After-school programs give us the opportunity to practice on real life activities.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Not sure ___

9. The after-school teacher speaks clearly in a natural conversational tone.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Not sure _____

10. There are many ways in the after-school program to communicate.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Not sure _____

11. The after-school teacher may engage in conversations with students in

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Not sure _____

12. languages other than English as long as it is not disruptive to the educational program.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Not sure _____

Appendix C: Interview Protocol in Spanish

Esta entrevista es sobre sus opiniones sobre los factores que motivan o te desmotivan como inmigrantes dominicanos en Puerto Rico asistiendo a clases de Inglés como segundo idioma, en el nivel secundario. Con el fin de garantizar la confidencialidad usted no tiene que proporcionar su nombre.

¿Qué te gusta más de tu clase de inglés como segundo idioma?

¿Qué cosas disminuyen tu motivación a dar lo mejor en tu clase de inglés como segundo idioma?

¿Dime lo que realmente te motiva a asistir a la clase de inglés como segundo idioma?

¿Qué sugerencias darías al Departamento de Educación de Puerto Rico para mejorar el aprendizaje del inglés?

Dime cómo tu maestro de Inglés como segundo idioma, te motiva o desmotiva?

¿Qué cambios en las clases sugerirías a tus maestros de inglés como segundo idioma, que no están usando actualmente?

¿Qué tecnología crees que podría ser utilizada para hacer la clase de inglés como segundo idioma, más motivadora?

¿Qué cambios sugieres a los maestros para hacer más interesante tu clase de Inglés como segundo Idioma, para los estudiantes como tú?

¿Cómo crees que te ayudaría el tener experiencias reales durante tu clase de Inglés como segundo idioma, con personas cuya lengua materna es el inglés?

¿Qué factores identificas que te hacen perder interés a no asistir a tu clase de inglés como segundo idioma?